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HELPS  
TO  
OFFICIAL MEMBERS  
OF THE  
METHODIST EPISCOPAL CHURCH,  
INDICATING  
THEIR POWERS, DUTIES, AND PRIVILEGES;  
AND  
SUGGESTING SUNDRY MISTAKES, METHODS, AND POSSIBILITIES  
WITH REGARD TO THEIR RESPECTIVE DEPARTMENTS  
OF SERVICE; DESIGNED TO RENDER THEM  
MORE EFFICIENT AND USEFUL.

BY JAMES PORTER, D.D.

*SECOND THOUSAND.*

NEW YORK:  
NELSON & PHILLIPS.  
CINCINNATI:  
HITCHCOCK & WALDEN.

1878.

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## INTRODUCTION.

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THOUGH Methodism originated under God by the agency of ministers, and has been thought by many to belong chiefly to them, its operations are largely controlled by laymen. This is true of all its denominational branches, and of the several departments involved in each. Nor is it any new arrangement ; it has been so from the beginning. As the necessity for lay agency appeared, it was introduced, and charged with responsibilities and duties to meet the demand.

In the Methodist Episcopal Church each local society is required to have three permanent classes of lay officers, Trustees, Stewards, and Class-Leaders. We do not mean to say that preach-

ers are never allowed to hold any of these offices, but simply that they are generally held by laymen. Besides, our Discipline provides for other lay officers, such as Sabbath-school Superintendents, etc., which constitute a fourth class.

These offices were devised for high and holy purposes. In many cases they are a grand success, in others a comparative failure. The following pages are designed to help all who have the honor of holding them, that they may be more useful. In writing them we have endeavored to mark the points of danger, and indicate the methods of success.

If we have said some simple things, and furnished some simple formulas and plans of operation, they will meet the wants of young and inexperienced officers who have every thing to learn, as our old officials had forty years ago.

Our work is as new and strange in much of this world which we have undertaken to Christianize, as it was in the State of New York in the days of Asbury. All the foundations are to be laid, and the temporal and spiritual superstructure is to be reared. Besides, many of our more experienced officials are not beyond the need of instruction and advice. They may be going on to perfection, but they have hardly reached it. We are not without hope that this little work may benefit them.

Preachers get line upon line from the bishops and others as to their duties; but our lay officials, especially those who are particularly concerned with finances, seem to be comparatively overlooked, and they fare little better in the matter of prayers. While leaders are often commended to the divine favor, trustees and stewards

are seldom mentioned. But this arises from the *secular* nature of their duties. Ministerial financiers suffer in a similar manner. Our object is to assist all these officers, that they may be more efficient, with less inconvenience and vexation.

JAMES PORTER.

BROOKLYN, *January 1*, 1877.

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# HELPS

TO

## OFFICIAL MEMBERS.

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### CHAPTER I.

#### OF TRUSTEES.

##### THEIR APPOINTMENT, POWERS, AND PRIVILEGES.

IN proceeding to erect his first house of religious worship, Mr. Wesley appointed eleven feoffees to take the whole charge of the enterprise, but soon found that *he* must raise all the money and do all the 'business, or nothing would be effected. But in attempting to beg the money, Mr. Whitefield and others refused to contribute, unless he would dismiss his feoffees, and do every thing in his own name. "Many reasons," he says, "they gave for this ; but one was enough, namely : ' That such feoffees would always have it in their power to control me, and, if I preached not as they liked, to turn me out of the room I had built.' " He, therefore, did as he was advised, but afterward

arranged for the settlement of his growing Society property on trustees, under such restrictions as should hold it sacredly to the uses for which it was given.

#### FIRST AMERICAN TRUSTEES.

Twenty-nine years after, the first Methodist chapel in America was erected, in John-street, New York, under the direction of *trustees*. The old subscription paper and first pulpit are still in existence. At the organization of the Methodist Episcopal Church, in 1784, the Conference adopted Mr. Wesley's deed, which was drawn by three of the most eminent lawyers of London, and which secures the fee of the property specified to the trustees named, in trust and confidence, and to the intent that they and their successors shall forever hold said property to the use and purposes for which it was purchased. (*Emory's Hist. of Dis.*, p. 70.) That deed has been variously modified since, to accommodate the laws of the land, but never to authorize the appropriation of the property, or any part of it, to other objects than those contemplated in its purchase.



## THE PRIMARY OBJECT OF TRUSTEES.

The primary object of trustees, therefore, is to take and hold all our Church property in their respective Societies, including meeting-houses, parsonages, cemeteries, etc., according to our Discipline and usages, in trust for the use of the ministers and members of the Methodist Episcopal Church. The fee is vested in them, not in the bishops, as has been unjustly charged many times. Our trustees have sold a great deal of property, but the signature of a bishop never was found necessary to perfect a title. No bishop or pastor was thought of in this connection. They might have been advised with as to the expediency of the sale; but not being owners, even in trust, their names could add nothing to the validity of the deed. This is not the case with Romanists, with whom we have been improperly compared.

A friend of ours and a trustee purchased a costly Roman Catholic church several years ago for commercial purposes. We asked him who signed the deed, to which he replied, "The bishop," giving his name.

It is equally the duty of trustees to *protect* the property, and keep it in order for the purposes contemplated. In some of the States they

receive the rents and income from it, and are holden to pay all the expenses of public worship, including the preacher's salary, fuel, lights, etc. In others, the stewards share the income, by mutual agreement, and pay all the expenses, except those which arise from repairs, insurance, taxes, etc. Of course they must be governed by the laws of their State, but no laws are so specific as not to allow the most free and friendly co-operation between these two classes of Church officers in promoting the common welfare of the Societies they serve.

#### THEIR POWERS, HOW LIMITED.

At the first, trustees only *held* the property. They had no power to mortgage or sell it. In 1796 the General Conference revised the Deed of Settlement, so as to allow them to do both, under certain restrictions. But in vindication of the provisions of the deed it declared, "the preservation of our union, and the progress of the work of God, indispensably require that the free and full use of the pulpit should be in the hands of the General Conference, and the yearly Conferences authorized by them."—*Journal*, vol. i, p. 15.

The trustees cannot shut the Church, therefore, against our regularly authorized ministers,

or against our members for whose use it was erected or purchased, nor pervert it to any use inconsistent with its legitimate objects. The General Conference forbids the acceptance “ of any charter, deed, or conveyance, for any house of worship to be used by us, unless it be provided in such charter, deed, or conveyance, that the trustees of said house shall at all times permit such ministers and preachers belonging to the Methodist Episcopal Church as shall from time to time be duly authorized by the General Conference of the ministers of our Church, or by the Annual Conferences, to preach and expound God’s holy word, and to execute the Discipline of the Church, and to administer the sacraments therein, according to the true meaning and purport of our deed of settlement.”—*Discipline*, ¶ 369.

Nor can trustees acquire authority to close the Church by any majority vote of their respective Societies. This case has been contested and settled. “They were chosen not to do the bidding of any Society, but “to execute the trust of carrying out the *intention* of those from whose benevolence flow the temporalities put in their charge. If such an excuse will ever be available, where will it stop? . . . Upon what principles can it be justified, that they who

now live to enjoy the fruits of the charity of the dead, should be permitted, at their caprice, to control, and, perhaps, divert from its original purpose, the endowment which owes none of its support to them? . No such principle is known in law or morals.”—2 *Barbour*, 415.

And this is emphatically just and right :—

1. Because it is required by a general principle of law, to wit, that money or property given for specific objects shall be forever holden to those objects so long as any of its proper beneficiaries demand it.

2. Because to leave such property to be used at the option of trustees or Societies would often defeat the purposes of benevolence and religion, and thus embarrass the operations of both. Who will be willing to donate money for religious purposes, knowing that it may be perverted in an hour after his death, if not before, to promote infidelity?

3. It will prevent contention. In purchasing land for a church in Boston, it was proposed to us to make a deed, leaving Methodism a little out of sight. We answered, “ No, if it is to be a Methodist Church, write it so in the deed ; if it is to be a Baptist Church, write that plainly, so that there can be no misunderstanding on the part of the contributors, or their successors.”

We have known several attempts to secure the control of the pulpit to the trustees or the Society, but they always made trouble. Real Methodists were fearful, and stood back, and others did not care to help a divided people.

#### OTHER RESTRICTIONS.

The power of our trustees is limited to the property belonging to the Church which they represent. It does not necessarily involve the control of the benevolent collections raised by the pastor or other officers. Trustees may take collections and subscriptions for the payment of debts, or for repairs and improvements on the property under their control ; but they have no right to forbid the pastor, stewards, or properly constituted committees, raising money to pay necessary expenses not otherwise provided for, or for the various benevolences of the Church. Nor have they any right to demand that all moneys thus raised shall pass through their hands. Where the house or pews are rented, it seems eminently proper that they should collect the rents ; but they may arrange with the stewards to do it, which is not uncommon where the stewards provide for the general expenses. But this is of no account, except in extreme cases of difficulty. These matters

should be fully and amicably arranged in the Quarterly Conference, or official meeting, and the best plan adopted and carried into effect by the co-operation of all parties. Some trustees have seemed to think themselves the owners and masters of the Church, with full liberty to please themselves. This is a mistake; they are servants of all. While they hold the Church property, they can only use it in a certain way, and that for the benefit of the parties and cause it was intended to subserve. They have no right to use the church when not occupied by the pastor for any other purpose inconsistent with that for which it was erected. "Corporations created for a specific object have no power to take and hold real estate for purposes wholly foreign to that object."—3 *Pickering*, 232-240.

#### TWO ERRORS TO BE AVOIDED.

In the course of human events trustees have been known, under special excitement, to shut the church doors against a regularly appointed preacher and his people. This is always an error and a breach of trust. It has also occurred in connection with these cases that the offended party have broken into the church and taken possession of it by force. This is another error which should never be committed.

The courts have decided that "if the trustees have violated their trust, the Society has ample remedy." But, "while the trustees are in actual possession the civil authority is bound to protect them against the unlawful and irregular intrusion of any persons, whether members of the Church or strangers. The trustees are responsible for the faithful discharge of their trust, not to a violent mob, but to the Society in a legal manner, whose interests they serve."—*Rep. 9 Johnson, 156.*

#### RESPONSIBILITY OF TRUSTEES.

Trustees in making contracts are not personally responsible when they sign them, or notes growing out of them, as trustees, as for example: John Doe, Trustee. If they do not sign as trustees, they may be personally holden. The same is true of the building committee. By signing as a committee they bind the trustees or other party for whom they act, but exonerate themselves as individuals, and their own property.

#### RIGHTS AND OBLIGATIONS UNDER THE PEW SYSTEM.

Our Discipline was arranged with reference to *free* churches, and contains no instructions

about the management of pews. But as the practice of selling or renting pews has become somewhat prevalent among us, it is necessary for trustees to understand the law governing in such cases. The numerous conflicts between trustees and pew-holders in other denominations have pretty clearly developed the rights of both parties. The following principles are reliable :—

The Society, or their representatives, the trustees, own the fee of the land on which the house is erected. By a grant of a pew the grantee . . . can claim no interest in the soil beneath his pew, nor in the space above it, nor an absolute claim to any part of the building itself. The Society can control the soil, can construct a gallery and pews above him, and prevent the pew-holder from removing the material of his pew from the house. The right of the pew-owner is limited as to time. If the house be burned, or destroyed by time, the right is lost. The grant of a pew does not bind the Society to provide for the maintenance of public worship in the meeting-house, but they may abandon it at pleasure. It is the opinion, also, of able jurists, that the rights of a pew-owner are subject to the right of a Society to remove the house to such a location as will best accommodate the whole congregation. In this case the value of the property is not diminished, but rather enhanced, by the more commodious location of the house. But the pew-owner does acquire the exclusive right to occupy his pew when the house is opened for public religious worship. . . . (See *17 Mass. Rep.*..435; *1 Pickering*, 102; *24 Pickering*, 347



4 *N. H. Rep.*, 181, 182 ; 3 *Washburn*, 266, 277 ; 5 *Metcalf*, 127 ; 5 *Cowen*, 496 ; 19 *Pickering*, 361.)

When a house is holden by trustees as a place of worship, and for no other use, and the deeds recognise this use exclusively, the pew-owner can claim the right to occupy his pew whenever the house is opened, though it be for a different purpose, and the trustees cannot prevent his doing so. "It is the practice," however, as Judge Shaw remarks. "for religious Societies to lend the use of their houses to various societies and philanthropic associations, to hold meetings for various purposes, and upon such occasions it has been usual for the body or association to whom the house is lent, to control the use of the pews, without regard to particular owners."—5 *Metcalf*, 133.

No pew-holder has a right to use his pew for any purpose other than that for which it was intended, nor can he modify it to the detriment of other pew-holders. Should the house be taken down, because unfit for further use as a church, he can claim no indemnity. But if taken down to render it more convenient, and the materials are used in the reconstruction, he has a just claim. In the latter case trustees should have the pews properly appraised, and tender each owner the value of his pew.

All interest of any person in a pew to extend beyond one year should be secured in writing. (16 *Wendall*, 28.)

Houses of worship, pews, and their furniture, are exempt from taxation in nearly all the States in the Union. In some, pews are regarded as real estate ; in others, as personal. They may be attached like other property, but New Hampshire, and, perhaps, some other States, exempt one pew for each family.

In selling pews at auction, the auctioneer, though a trustee, is the agent for both parties, for the purchaser as well as the trustees. The memorandum of the sale must be perfect, including the conditions, etc. The mere writing of the name of the purchaser on the ground plan of the pews, with the amount which is bid, is not sufficient. (16 *Wendall*, 28.)

Embarrassments have arisen in selling pews outright, and also in renting them, from the lack of proper precaution in constructing the lease or deed. It should always embrace the following particulars, and, perhaps, some others, to provide for special occasions, to wit:—

The pew or seat in the Methodist Episcopal Church in the said L——, which is numbered ——, with all the privileges and appurtenances, estate, right, title, interest, and property of us, or of either of us, whatsoever, as trustees for and in behalf of the said Methodist Episcopal Society, reserving to the said Methodist Episcopal Society the sole use of the said church, as a place of religious worship, according to the rules and discipline which from time to time may be agreed upon at their General Conferences; and also reserving to the said Methodist Episcopal Society the sole use of the said pew during the holding of love-feasts, class-meetings, and such special church meetings as the duly authorized ministers of the Methodist Episcopal Church shall appoint; and also reserving unto the said Methodist Episcopal Society the right to levy a proportionate tax upon said pew for the necessary repairs and insurance of the house. (*Baker on the Discipline*, pp. 189, 194. Ed. 1874.)

All these objects may be easily provided for at the outset. If overlooked then there is no

telling what embarrassments may ensue. An ounce of prevention is better than a pound of cure.

#### OF THE APPOINTMENT OF TRUSTEES.

The Discipline requires that each board of trustees shall consist of from *three* to *nine* persons not less than *twenty-one* years of age, two thirds of whom shall be members of the Methodist Episcopal Church. Where the civil law does not interfere, they are to be chosen annually by the Quarterly Conference of the circuit or station upon the nomination of the preacher in charge, or the presiding elder of the district, and hold their office until their successors are elected.—*Discipline*, paragraphs 370-373.

But, owing to the diversity in former or existing State laws, there is little uniformity among us either in originating or perpetuating boards of trustees. In New York these boards were formerly arranged in conformity to ancient parish laws, enacted for the convenience of other denominations, and modified by innumerable amendments, which challenged the profoundest legal wisdom. Many boards in New England were organized under Congregational parish laws which were as unsuited to our economy as a

poor carriage road is to a railroad car. In that embarrassing state of affairs many were formally organized under special charters, and elect trustees as they require. Several States have provided a general act under which all denominations may assume corporate powers in conformity with their peculiar system and methods of business. Every State should enact such a law to save religious Societies the trouble and expense of procuring special acts, or running their own machinery in antiquated grooves to which it has little adaptation.

The aim, however, should always be to elect men who are interested in the Church, whether members or not—men of talent and influence, who know something of human nature and business, and have enterprise and integrity enough to exercise the functions of the office in exact accord with its objects.

#### PROPERTY TO BE SECURED IN PERPETUITY.

In obtaining property, special care should be taken with regard to the title, that it be unquestionable. Many deeds have been accepted which secured the fee to the trustees only so long as they occupied the premises for church purposes. If they should vacate, the property would revert to the grantor or his heirs. This was a mis-

take. It is generally bad policy to accept the *gift*, or, more properly speaking, the *loan* of property on these conditions. It is better to *purchase* and take a title in fee simple. Many of our bad locations originated in the gift of the land, and this restriction in the deed stands in the way of a change for the better in many places.

This, perhaps, is all that need be said generally with regard to trustees. Other points of interest will be developed in speaking of their work. It should never be forgotten, however that the office is not for the glory of the men who hold it, but for the glory of God and the welfare of the Church. It gives them a commanding influence, in the exercise of which *self* should be excluded, otherwise there will be trouble. We believe our trustees generally to be good men. The Church is greatly indebted to them for their self-sacrifice and efficiency. But some are hardly entitled to this credit. They insist on maintaining a ministry that accomplishes little more than a regular decline, and a social life that is ruinous to vital piety, and the Church is dying upon their hands. Churches of different denominations have been sold out and buried, and it should be inscribed upon their tombstones in staring capitals, DIED OF

THE TRUSTEES. And, if there is not an improvement in the management of this holy trust in other directions, we fear the number will be greatly increased. Methodism is *life*, or it is nothing. It was not made to follow the ruts of other sects. It must be aggressive or retrograde—advance or die. It needs trustees to stir up its fires and pile on the fuel. But when they neglect this, and apply their great power to the brakes, what can we expect?

## CHAPTER II.

## OF CHURCH BUILDING.

HISTORICAL FACTS — EVILS RESULTING FROM HEAVY DEBTS — PRACTICAL  
SUGGESTIONS, ETC.

THE corner-stone of the first Methodist chapel in the world was laid in Bristol, England, May 12, 1739; and that of the first in America was laid in New York twenty-nine years after, in 1768. Both enterprises were undertaken after much prayer, and carried through with many sacrifices, though not without incurring some debt.

This was the beginning of Methodist church building, the history of which has never been written, and never can be. Once started on this line, and being generally shut out of public buildings, every little Society began to covet a chapel of its own, and rushed into the work, and many of them into debt beyond their means of paying. When the aggregate amount of the connectional debt was found to be £11,383, some fifty-five thousand dollars, Mr. Wesley was alarmed, and said, "We shall be ruined." To prevent further embarrassment he commanded,

"Let all the preaching-houses be built plain and decent, but no more expensive than is absolutely unavoidable;" and he forbade the building of any new chapel "unless *two thirds* of the expenses should be subscribed."

American Methodists early adopted his principles, but soon departed from them, especially in the matter of contracting debts. The Conferences demurred, but this did not restrain enterprising adventurers, and the debts increased, though the churches were generally sufficiently plain and uninviting.

#### WONDERFUL ADVANCE IN CHURCH PROPERTY.

Twenty years ago we had few churches that would now be deemed tasteful. Our first report of Church property was made in 1857, showing 8,335 churches, valued at \$15,781,310. Soon afterward there sprang up a wonderful revival in church building, demanding better churches and more of them. In ten years (1867) we reported 11,121 churches, valued at \$35,885,439, showing an increase of nearly one third in the number of churches, and of more than 125 per cent. in their value. And yet we have gained more rapidly since than before. The Minutes of 1875 show 15,633 churches, valued at \$71,353,234, or an increase of more than one



third in the number of churches, and about ninety per cent. in their estimated value in eight years.

This rapid advance has involved great liberality and tremendous struggles. If it has been attended with unprecedented blunders and mortifying defeats, it is not surprising. The success of some who began to build early in the period mentioned stimulated others to venture beyond their ability, and many have been caught by the financial pressure, and will not escape without a terrible scathing, if they do not lose every thing. The struggle may be useful, and the experience of the immediate sufferers ought to teach others a lesson of caution.

These figures show, also, what we well know to be the fact, namely, that many of the churches of to-day are of much higher grade than we formerly possessed. The cost of those reported in 1857 averaged less than \$1,900 each, while those reported in 1874 averaged over \$4,600. This may be accounted for in part by the advance in cost of labor and material, but it is largely attributable to a multitude of expensive churches, many of which were ill advised.

#### HEAVY DEBTS DISASTROUS.

While we strongly believe in fine churches, we see serious objections to such as cannot be

paid for and conveniently sustained without burdening our friends or courting our enemies.

1. They drive off the poor, who cannot afford to purchase or hire a pew in them, unless it be in a retired position, and who have too much pride or self-respect to occupy a free seat in the gallery. This effect is little less certain when such houses are nominally free, for they require so much begging, to which the poor are unable to respond with a liberality corresponding to the necessities of the case, that they feel compelled to stay at home, or go to other churches where they can occupy a higher position relatively at less expense. This is a great calamity. Many of our present ministers and wealthy men came from this class. Being converted young, they grew up into position and power among us. We have little success in winning men already rich, or ministers already prepared to our hand. Our candidates are among the poor, and are to be converted and led to the ministry or to wealth as God shall direct. Hence to lose the poor is ruinous to our prospects.

These expensive churches contribute to this evil in another way. They are apt to change the spirit and style of public and social worship in a manner to render them less attractive to the poor. A splendid house demands a fine

preacher, and a fine preacher to please a particular class of hearers. Thus the poor are overlooked, and soon slip away to find more congenial society and higher spirituality. This is, perhaps, the worst effect of extravagant churches, but is by no means the only one to be deprecated.

2. They often keep men of means from coming among us. Not that they are unwilling to pay a reasonable amount in pew rent or subscription, but they see a crushing debt hanging over the church, the responsibility of which they do not care to assume. They are sharp enough to know that every worshiper will have to be taxed to his utmost ability to carry that burden, so they only visit the church evenings, and at other odd times, as they may, without incurring any responsibility. Some of our Societies have been sadly retarded by this cause. They have wondered why their preacher did not "draw" more people. While they remained in their old house some would not come because it was not respectable. Had they built reasonably they would have obviated this objection without incurring another ; but plunging recklessly into debt for a beautiful house, which is no credit to them considering its incumbrances, they are more embarrassed than before. Many are afraid of them

3. Another evil connected with such enterprises is, that we often lose our own men of means as well as the poor. Finding that the expenses of the church are a constant and exorbitant drain upon their purses, and a tax upon their patience, and seeing no relief, they move away to escape the pressure. Or, if this is not convenient, they take offense at some trifling circumstance and go to another church?

4. Finally, such churches often necessitate so much catering to the world as to quench spiritual life and defeat their ostensible purpose. Instead of being the blessing anticipated, they are a curse and a hinderance to the cause they are intended to promote. Improvements are desirable, but great errors are committed in building so expensively. Houses costing half or two thirds the amount invested, under wise management would answer all the ends of convenience and utility, and might be paid for, or nearly so.

Cases might be mentioned confirmatory of all that we have said, and much more of the kind. They are blots upon our history. Thousands of good people have been alienated from us forever by reason of them, and it will require years of struggle and sacrifice to recover from their ruinous influence.

But it should be said that these are exceptional cases. The majority of our late church-building enterprises have probably been wise and successful. Our gain in this respect has been remarkable, as the foregoing figures show. But one defeat makes a deeper impression than many triumphs. The object of this writing is to warn our trustees against these excesses. The forced sale of one fine church at our door belonging to another denomination, and the extreme danger of a similar one of our own, has prompted it. In the first case the Society was well accommodated, having a fine chapel large enough to comfortably seat more people than would be likely to attend on ordinary occasions. But certain leaders were bound to have a "first-class" church, and, without waiting to secure any subscriptions that would justify the necessary expense, pushed forward and completed the work, incurring a debt of more than one hundred thousand dollars, when the mortgagees, failing to get their interest, sold it out and scattered the Society to the winds. In the other case the Society sadly needed a new church, and were able to build one worth thirty or thirty-five thousand dollars; but being misled by their advisers, who seem not to have been well informed in such business, were drawn by degrees

into an expense, 'for church, parsonage, bell, organ, piano, melodeon, etc., of about ninety-three thousand dollars, leaving debts upon their hands of sixty thousand dollars, which they have not the means to pay. The trustees have suffered extremely in their feelings, business, and reputation, as have the people, and all have wished many times that they were back in their little church. How the affair will terminate it is impossible to tell. The prospect is that it will be sold at auction to satisfy the mortgages, in which case it will bankrupt the leading trustees, who have involved themselves personally and a number of others holding the position of creditors.

These facts show the wisdom of our Discipline, which peremptorily prohibits the contraction of unreasonable debts, and requests our people to discountenance them by declining to give pecuniary aid to agents who travel abroad for the collection of funds to meet them. (See Discipline, ¶ 366-368.)

In view of this state of affairs we propose a few

#### PRACTICAL SUGGESTIONS.

If the church is to be built and paid for by one man, or a few men who are able and disposed to assume the responsibility, they must

be allowed to determine its size and expense without much interference from others. But even in this case it is wise to consult the feelings of those who are expected to enjoy the use of it, and we think it better to allow them to share in the expense to the extent of their disposition and ability. It would do them good by making them feel that they are partners in the enterprise, and repel the suspicion of "one man power," which is always detrimental to harmony and success.

But in all such cases the expense should be paid at once, or be provided for in a legal manner, so that if the party or parties concerned should die, change their location, lose their property, or become alienated from the Church, the debt may not fall on the masses, who would never have contracted it and are unable to pay or carry it. Our first experience in paying church debts fully justifies this suggestion. The debt was incurred by one good rich man, who controlled in every thing, and intended to pay it, but was suddenly stricken down by death, leaving no provision, in his will or otherwise, for doing so. His heirs, being opposed to the Methodists, would do nothing. The result was, the debt fell upon a poor society, which struggled under it for many years, expecting to be sold

out. Deliverance, however, came at last, but not until several preachers had suffered for want of bread, and Methodism had been sadly dishonored.

This remark is equally applicable to other benevolent enterprises. Gentlemen have liberally proposed to give large sums toward the establishment or endowment of a college or school, and thereby drawn others into the movement, but, failing to pay the amount, or give proper security, the whole has been lost, to the damage, if not to the utter defeat, of the enterprise. Those who are kind enough to promise such indispensable sums should secure them as fully as they would any just debt for the same amount, otherwise their proposed liberality may prove to be a curse rather than a blessing.

But, to come to the main point, we suggest:

I. When a new church is contemplated let the matter be thoroughly considered and talked over by all the parties in interest, rich and poor together—not excluding the children. Though the trustees are the official leaders in the business, they are the servants of the people, and need their sympathy and support. But if they move independently of them, and erect a church to suit themselves only, how can they expect to have either? We knew a case of this sort. The house was well enough, but the deed was



a little irregular. It was called the *trustees'* church, and the people did not cheerfully rally to pay for it. The result was, it was shut up under foreclosure, and the congregation turned into the street. This was all for the want of a little prudent care of the masses at the outset.

"In order," says our Discipline, "more effectually to prevent our people from contracting debts which they are not able to discharge, it shall be the duty of the Quarterly Conference of every circuit and station where it is contemplated to build a house or houses of worship to secure the ground or lot on which such house or houses are to be built, according to our Deed of Settlement, which deed must be legally executed; and also said Quarterly Conference shall appoint a judicious committee of at least three members of our Church, who shall form an estimate of the amount necessary to build ; and *three fourths* of the money, according to such estimate, shall be secured or subscribed before any such building shall be commenced."—*Discipline*, ¶ 367.

2. Having settled upon the church needed—its location, style, etc.—the next point is to ascertain how much the people are disposed to give toward it. And caution is necessary at this point, as some will promise to give more than they are able, or will ever pay. They will

follow their zeal, ambition, or, perhaps, their pride, rather than their judgment and capacity. We have known men to subscribe a thousand dollars who never had so much, and whose prospects were not improving. They did it under instruction to do so, and trust in the Lord to furnish the means to pay it. In one case, where some \$27,000 were subscribed on this principle, not \$6,000, the pastor informed me, were ever collected, and not *one dollar* on several thousand-dollar subscriptions. This is the direct road to insolvency. It may make a brilliant show in the papers, but it will not pay church bills. Our advice is directly the opposite, namely : subscribe all you are able to pay, and when you are more able subscribe again. The losses on these first subscriptions have often led to serious embarrassments.

And we will add in this connection, place little confidence in hints, inuendoes, and conditional assurances looking toward liberal help, which you cannot reduce to a *bona-fide* subscription. The presumption that Mr. or Mrs. — will do some good thing is not reliable. Put down nothing that cannot be fairly depended on in time to pay the bills to be incurred. And when you have done your best in prosperous times and changeable communities,

you may calculate on a loss of one sixth of the amount, which will, perhaps, be made up from unexpected sources.

3. With a subscription thus carefully made, and a mortgage on the property for one fourth or *one third* of its cost, *fairly engaged*, you may proceed. A moderate debt, under a good financial policy, is no damage to a Church. It sometimes holds and steadies it in a storm, as an anchor does a ship. We have known several saved to Methodism by their debts. Had they been unincumbered, the malcontents would have taken them off with themselves, but the burden was greater than they could bear.

We do not object to a small debt for another reason: good churches are made for new-comers as well as for present residents, and, judging from our past progress, their future occupants will be better able, and not less disposed, to pay the debts remaining on them than their predecessors were to lay the foundations.

DO NOT BUILD FOR POSTERITY.

There is one other remark that may help to keep brethren out of extravagant enterprises. While there is good reason to believe that new and respectable churches will be occupied from twenty to thirty years, we cannot calculate on

much beyond. We say, therefore, to brethren about to build, build for yourselves, and not for posterity. The society at — needed a new church, and could have erected one for \$30,000 which would have been every way adapted to their necessities. But in their pious benevolence they built one for posterity costing twice that sum, entailing on themselves and their immediate successors a crushing debt. But in a few years, while some of the trustees were still living, "posterity" tore it down and erected one more agreeable to its taste. Build for yourselves, and leave posterity to do the same. If you can nearly pay for a church that will meet your demands for ten or fifteen years, build it. Your successors will repudiate it and build anew, though you should expend three times as much.

By following this policy you can maintain your respectability, and, what is of little less importance, your *independence*. A Society loaded with debt becomes servile and crouching. It must please every body, so as to get money and keep off the sheriff. It will be tempted to resort to questionable concerts, fairs, lotteries, lectures, games, and excursions, against its own convictions and professions, and often to the disgrace of religion and Methodism. And,

then, it must be continually begging, which is mortifying alike to the beggar and the people.

#### HOW NOT TO PROCEED.

4. We have said, with the subscription described, and a permanent loan from some solid institution or individual that will not be called for so long as the interest is paid, you may proceed. But in what manner? The first thing is to get a *plan* of a house that will come within your contemplated expense. This is often sought by engaging an architect who, in nineteen cases out of twenty, will furnish an original model, and under-estimate the cost of the construction. In an experience of forty-five years we have never known a solitary case where the expense did not exceed the figures of the architect. It has sometimes been more than double. We have a case in hand now involving a debt for church and parsonage of \$60,000, where the cost for the church was not to exceed \$32,000, and yet it ran up to over \$72,000 without any serious accident. The trustees erred in enlisting an architect who neither understood them or his business. Architects have their uses, like other professional men, but they know little of the difficulty of paying for a church, and will generally need to be followed afar off.

### CHAPTER III. OF ARCHITECTS.

PLANS, CONTRACTS, PARSONAGES, ORGANS, ETC.

HAVING indicated the lack of wisdom in BLINDLY FOLLOWING ARCHITECTS, we will now add, it is generally impolitic to employ them at all to get up designs, unless you have plenty of money, and wish to astonish the world with some new model. 1. Because you cannot afford to experiment on the business. 2. Because the chances for success, were you to attempt it, are against you. The Methodist Episcopal Church has already more than fifteen thousand church edifices in this country, embracing many different styles of architecture, costing from \$300 to \$250,000 each. Multitudes of them have been exhibited on paper, and others are within reach, so that you can easily see how they appear. Their sizes, proportions, materials, and cost may be easily obtained, and will indicate which is to be preferred, all things considered. It is not difficult to find churches constructed for \$10,000 that

will be justly preferred to others which cost twice that amount. Some of them are perfect charms, beautiful, easy to speak and hear in, and in every way attractive and inviting, while others are as notably defective. It is folly to expect any architect to excel the best of them, particularly in their acoustic properties. Churches differ radically in this particular, and no architect can tell why. In some, the lowest voice can be heard in every part ; while in others of the same size the loudest is indistinct, and hearing difficult, if not impossible. The only *sure* way to success in this respect is to select a model that has been fully tested and follow it. The importance of this point cannot be over-estimated. It has more to do with the health, happiness, and usefulness of the preacher, and the *size* of the congregation, than is generally imagined. For him to strain his voice to make himself heard, and fail, is killing, not only to him, but the people ; they will soon leave him.

3. Because you can readily obtain models of these most desirable houses, embracing every thing necessary, without an architect. Why overlook all these advantages, and venture upon new experiments ?

The same is true with regard to another point of incalculable importance. Many of our houses

of worship are too *churchly*—a miserable imitation of some old cathedral—cold and unsocial. One feels a chill the moment he enters them, as he feels easy and comfortable on entering others of a different construction. What makes the difference it may be difficult to determine ; but the high and ponderous pulpit and gallery, and the massive pews, have something to do with it. It had been better for Methodism, perhaps, had the old statute forbidding us to build churches remained in force, and thus compelled us to erect social, home-like *chapels*. They cost less, are more convenient and inviting, and make charming and respectable places of religious worship and pious resort. By looking about trustees will readily experience the difference, and may select a model to suit their taste and means.

#### PLANS AND SPECIFICATIONS INDISPENSABLE.

But, whether with or without an architect, you should have your plan complete from foundation to dome before you strike the first blow ; and then write out the specifications, embracing every timber, board, and brick, the style of finish, the pulpit, pews, etc., etc., even to a window-spring. This will require time and work, but it will save time, and money too, in



the end. There can be no accurate estimate of the cost without it. Hurried and half-finished plans lead to many changes and *extras*, which experience has proved to be exceedingly expensive. With such a plan a builder can tell at the outset just what material he needs, and may contract for it at once with the greatest economy. Without it he has to work at random, and purchase from time to time as he finds it necessary to accommodate the ever-changing notions of his employers.

Since writing the above an article has appeared in the *Evening Post* giving a frightful exhibit of Church debts in New York city, and questioning the *honesty* of such investments. It most truthfully affirms that "it would be easy to show that for *half*, or *less than half* the cost of any of our finer churches, a building fully as large, quite as comfortable, and reasonably well looking outside and inside, might have been built." People generally have little idea of the vast amount of money worse than wasted in the construction of churches. The examination of existing edifices and their relative cost can but furnish trustees with lessons of business wisdom they will not be likely to derive from architects !

## HOW TO MAKE A CONTRACT.

The plans and specifications completed, the next thing to be done is to contract for the work. If you are acquainted with a competent builder who knows how to purchase stock and employ men to the best advantage, you may commit the whole job to him, and do it by the day. But you will build more economically to advertise for bids, and let out the whole contract. Honest men, even, will do more work by the job than by the day in the same length of time, and some men will get rich by doing jobs which would bankrupt others, because they know better how to purchase material and turn off work. In this way, too, you have the benefit of competition.

Then, if you will enlist some capable person to watch the progress of the building, and see that the plan and specifications are faithfully followed, you will be likely to be satisfied. But it will be necessary to contract with parties who have the means to carry the matter through, or when the house is done you may find it covered with builders' liens, or otherwise involved in a manner to embarrass you. And, to make a sure thing of your contract, we repeat, leave nothing to be understood, but write out every particular

just as you mean to have it, and then stand your ground.

These suggestions are the result of considerable experience in building. They are as applicable to parsonages, seminaries, sheds, etc., as to churches.

#### AN EMERGENCY PROVIDED FOR.

But it may be asked, "What can be done when we have no one among us to work up the plan as proposed?" We answer, Hire some honest practical builder, who is not going to take the contract, to do it for you. He will have no temptation to deceive you or to swell the expense, as he might have if he were to receive a percentage on the outlay, as is too common in such cases. This is a very delicate part of the business, and should be executed with much care. A few dollars laid out at this point may save thousands on the building, and will often keep Societies out of vexatious difficulties. Some of our preachers have done so much of this kind of work that they have become *masters*. They should not be overlooked in such undertakings. We used to advise all the churches on our district about to build to send for one preacher in particular, who was a mechanic before he was a minister, and could draw plans and calculate the

cost of construction with great accuracy, and we have no doubt that he saved them thousands of dollars. But most preachers are not safe managers in such business, having had little education or experience to fit them for it. They are more likely to follow their wishes or ambition than their judgment, if they have any, and plan for a splendid church, without due regard to its cost or the chances of paying for it.

#### DANGER OF ATTEMPTING TOO MUCH.

Brethren often make a mistake, also, in attempting too much. Being unable to pay for a suitable church without incurring a debt, in their zeal they strike for a parsonage also, and other appliances, which, however desirable, are not positively necessary, and might be postponed without serious detriment. A poor Society at —— undertook to erect a church of moderate cost, which they could have paid for ; but as they proceeded their plans expanded in the hands of the architect, until they involved an outlay of more than double the amount proposed. Had they stopped here they might possibly have survived, though it would have cost them a terrible struggle ; but, wishing to have every thing complete, they added a large bell, a splendid parsonage, a grand organ, piano, and

melodeon, and contracted a debt they can never pay, and are now in the hands of the sheriff, who will probably sell them out. Had they adhered to their original purpose, or only finished the basement of the church, which would have accommodated the people five years at least, they would have saved themselves a world of trouble and mortification, and the cause of Methodism a disgrace it will not soon overcome. Other Societies have taken a wiser course, and purchased land enough for a church and vestry. Having erected the vestry, making it convenient for public worship, and occupied it until they needed the church and were able to build it, they are now enjoying every convenience without embarrassment.

#### ERRORS WITH REGARD TO LOCATION.

And this suggests other errors which have too often occurred with regard to the location; it has been ill chosen, and unreasonably restricted. Societies in their poverty have accepted the gift of a lot in the wrong place, when they might better have bought one in the right place. Then they have often purchased only enough land for a small church, when they should have bought enough for a large one, parsonage, sheds, and, in some cases, for a cemetery. Roman

Catholics seldom blunder in this respect. They look ahead, and buy largely where they see a coming town or city, though they may not occupy it for many years. If *we* happen to have a little surplus land we are apt to sell it. A few who have held on are now independent by reason of the *advance* in the value of their spare lots.

The British Conference, after multiplied experiments, has brought church building somewhat under conference supervision and control. Our Church aimed at something of the kind in the organization of the Church Extension Society, but has largely failed in this particular, and will fail, we fear, owing to the broadness of our field of action, and the independency of our people. Our local Churches and officers must take care of themselves in this matter. The connectional feeling and purse of our Church are not sufficient to protect them if they fail to do so. They should, therefore, plan with the same economy they would if they stood absolutely alone, except on missionary ground. Most of the talk about getting help from the Church Extension Society, or from "abroad," is delusive, and must not be trusted—especially in application to the erection of fine churches.

## PARSONAGES, ORGANS, ETC., DEFERRED.

We are aware of the inconvenience of being without a church, and of uncomfortable churches ; but, great as it is, it is preferable to a crushing debt requiring perpetual scheming to get money to appease creditors. A good parsonage has its advantages, and an organ is desirable, but neither can compensate for embarrassing debts. Besides, it is easier generally to pay for them, and other similar conveniences, in advance than afterward. Many will give something to buy them who, when obtained, will give nothing to pay for them. There is little difficulty in raising the money to purchase a bell where the people feel the need of one, but it may be next to impossible to pay for one already obtained. Where it is hard to get money enough to pay for the church, these things had better be left out of the building account, to be taken up afterward, and separately, as circumstances may suggest. And they had better be paid for when purchased, rather than bought on credit.

With regard to *organs*, we shall speak more particularly under the head of church music. Societies have made grand mistakes in expending thousands of dollars where as many hundreds would have served them a better purpose.

*Parsonages*, too, have been built without due consideration. Preachers, who should have a *study*, and are liable to much company, need a little different house from ordinary people—one that is convenient for doing work, easy to warm, and that furnishes room for stowing numerous boxes and trunks used in moving. Consultation with pastors, especially with their wives, would often secure a much better house for the same amount of money.

Other suggestions might be appropriate, but perhaps these are sufficient for the present.

Let no one construe what we have said into distrust of God. There is room enough for trust after we have done our best, and there is no ground for it until we reach that point. God helps those who help themselves by trying to *keep out* of difficulties as well as by seeking to *get* out of them. When he calls we must venture, though it be in the dark ; till then we should follow reason and common sense, and pray for direction.

#### OF COLLECTIONS.

Great embarrassments have resulted from neglect with regard to the collections. The subscription book should specify when the several sums pledged shall be due and payable,



and it is generally wise to have them divided into installments to accommodate the maturing liabilities of the trustees or building committee growing out of the contract. People in ordinary circumstances can pay a subscription in three or four installments several weeks or months apart, easier than they can pay the whole at once. And, if the subscribers understand that these payments are arranged to accommodate the obligations of the trustees to the builder, they will be much more likely to pay promptly.

#### OF SUBSCRIPTION PAPERS.

No particular form is required to render them legal. The object and conditions of the subscriptions should be clearly stated, and the sum should be made payable to the order of the trustees. No pecuniary consideration need to be mentioned. The following form will suffice :

We, the undersigned, severally agree to pay to the Trustees of the Methodist Episcopal Church in ——— the sum set against our respective names for the purpose and toward the expense of (here state the object, whether it be to build or repair a church or parsonage, or whatever it may be,) one third on demand, and the balance, (here state the time or times.)

Dated ——— 187 .

If any subscription is to be paid otherwise than in cash, this should be stated. All fictitious subscriptions obtained for the purpose of inducing others to subscribe, or to subscribe more largely, invalidates all that follow them. If the object proposed should not be undertaken, the subscription is not binding. (See Baker on the Discipline, pp. 195-197.)

We advise, also, that payment be kindly and promptly demanded as in every other business, and of each and every subscriber. Trustees who can readily command funds on their own personal credit are too apt to neglect this. They often collect the larger subscriptions in full, and leave the smaller ones to the last, which gives the impression to the young and poor that they are not considered of much account. This is a double mistake, *first*, in that it increases the liability of losing the small subscriptions altogether ; and, *secondly*, in that it lets an opportunity slip of impressing the poor that their subscriptions, however small, are appreciated, and that they are partners in the noble enterprise. This large class of our members and friends have enough, at the best, to discourage them, and should have the benefit of all such attentions, for their own good and that of the cause when they shall become more able.

Few fully appreciate the importance of keeping such people in good spirits. Young —— subscribed five dollars toward erecting the first little church in his native town, and raised the money by trapping musk-rats, and felt the better for it, and for the manner in which it was received. When that church was superseded by a better one, a splendid edifice, he gave many thousands. Had his first noble liberality been despised, the result might have been less gratifying.

We say, then, collect the small subscriptions promptly and kindly. Let little Tommy pay his, and Mary hers, and the old folks theirs, and make them feel they are important spokes in the wheel of progress. This will justify you in pressing your claims upon another class every-where found, who have more means, but are constitutionally tardy, especially in paying church subscriptions.

#### IMPORTANCE OF FREQUENT REPORTS.

Trustees are amenable to the Quarterly Conference, to which they are required to report annually in detail. (See Discipline, ¶ 377.) But as a matter of policy, and therefore of duty, they should also report not less frequently to the whole congregation, showing their receipts and expenditures. People give more freely

when they know what is done with their money. As they are all partners in the business, and are desired to contribute, they should be kept informed of its operations, necessities, and prospects. Some trustees have made a great mistake in demanding to be trusted, and yet concealing their accounts. Fair and open dealing is the best for all concerned. Quarterly reports are desirable. They show interest on the part of the officers, and remind delinquents of their shortcomings.

#### OTHER SECULAR DUTIES.

It devolves upon the trustees, also, to look after the church when finished, to see that it is kept clean, warm, and well ventilated. All these things have an important bearing upon the congregation. A cold house is dangerous to health, and an excessively hot one is little less so, and few people can stand a strong current of air even in warm weather. Trustees ought to consider these inconveniences, and guard against them, not in building only, but afterward. People in delicate health hardly dare go to some churches. If the trustees would be upon the alert to make them comfortable, they would add much to their pleasure and to the popularity of their preachers.

## SPIRITUAL RESPONSIBILITY OF TRUSTEES.

Trustees are too apt to confine themselves to *financial* duties. Indeed, they have sometimes said to others, in so many words, "You do the praying and we will look after the money."

This is an error, a ruinous error, both to themselves and the Church. Their official position gives them influence and opportunity, increasing their obligations to Christian activity. It is an additional talent, for the right use of which God will hold them responsible.

I. Being in charge of the Church property, it naturally devolves on them to be at the regular service *early*, to smile on all who come, and give them a cordial greeting ; especially to welcome *strangers*, and treat them in such a manner that they will feel at home and come again. In large places this is indispensable. It does not answer to transfer this work to the sexton or to ushers. They may do well, but they are only subordinates. The people want to see the *fathers* and *rulers*. A word from them is authoritative. A friendly shake of their hand is inspiring. Accepting the office of trustee, one should feel that he is the servant of all, to please and profit them. Especially that he is bound to make the church inviting, not only by its

general appearance and internal arrangements, but by the urbanity and Christian courtesy of its officials. He must be there, wide awake and with open arms, to receive and entertain all who come, and make their personal acquaintance. This is little less important in the country, where there are few strangers. Half of the children and youth belong to poor families, and have little acquaintance with Church officers. If noticed at all by them it is often in the way of complaint. It is forgotten that they are to be men and women, and may be intelligent and influential. Trustees and other functionaries should give them special attention, and please "them for their good to edification." It will encourage them to behave well and try to merit respect.

If our trustees would take this course we should have fewer empty churches. People don't like to go to church to be reminded, by the inattention of trustees, that they are not wanted. A warm recognition from this source would lead tens of thousands to the church who have no place among us.

2. They should also take an active part in the Sunday-school and social means of grace. By ignoring these fundamental institutions of the Church, or only noticing them as specta-

tors, they depreciate them in the estimation of younger minds, and impair their efficiency. Many of our Churches are suffering to-day from the neglect of trustees in these particulars.

Thus saith the Lord—'tis God commands ;  
Workers with God, the charge obey ;  
Remove what e'er his work withstands,—  
Prepare, prepare his people's way.

## CHAPTER IV.

### OF STEWARDS.

THEIR DUTIES—NECESSARY QUALIFICATIONS—POSSIBLE ERRORS—SOURCES  
OF HELP, ETC.

STEWARDS are appointed annually by the Quarterly Conference on the nomination of the preacher in charge, but may be reappointed in like manner from year to year without restriction. Their duties are partially financial, but to an important extent social, benevolent, and spiritual. While the trustees hold and protect the Church property, the stewards provide for current expenses, except where the civil law imposes this work upon the trustees. It is required of them :—

1. "To take an exact account of all the money or other provisions collected for the support of the preachers in the circuit or station, and apply the same as the Discipline directs."

2. They are required to "make an accurate return of every expenditure of money, whether to the preachers, the sick, or the poor," showing that they have charge of the local *charities*



of the Church, as well as its necessary expenses.

3. They are to “seek the needy and distressed in order to relieve and comfort them, and to inform the preacher of any sick or disorderly persons.” This is religious pastoral work of the highest importance—the very work Mr. Wesley performed himself before the idea of a lay-stewardship occurred to him. (*Works*, vol. v, p. 185.) Then he transferred the business to stewards, charging them in these significant words :—

(1.) “Be frugal ; save every thing that can be saved honestly. (2.) Spend no more than you receive. Contract no debts. (3.) Have no long accounts. Pay every thing within the week. (4.) Give none that ask relief either an ill word or an ill look. Do not *hurt* them if you cannot help them. (5.) Expect no thanks from man.”

4. Another important duty of stewards (one that is assigned to no other officer of the Church) is, “to tell the preachers what they think wrong in them ;” or, to use the language of Mr. Wesley, to tell them “in *love*, if they think any thing amiss, either in their doctrine or life.”—*Works*, vol. v, p. 186.

5. “To attend the quarterly meetings of the

circuit, and the leaders and stewards' meetings ; to give advice, if asked, in planning the circuit ; to attend committees for the application of money to Churches ; to give counsel in matters of arbitration ; to provide the elements for the Lord's Supper," etc., etc.—*Discipline*, ¶ 193.

To do all this work efficiently stewards need to be "men of solid piety, who both know and love the Methodist doctrine and discipline, and of good natural and acquired abilities to transact the temporal business."—*Discipline*, ¶ 191.

Hence said Mr. Wesley to his stewards :—

"1. You are to be men full of the Holy Ghost and wisdom, that you may do all things in a manner acceptable unto God. 2. You are to begin and end every meeting with earnest prayer to God for a blessing on all your undertakings. 3. You are to produce your accounts the first Tuesday in every month, that they may be transcribed into the ledger. 4. You are to consider whenever you meet, 'God is here.' Therefore, be serious ; utter no trifling word ; speak as in his presence, and to the glory of his great name. 5. In all debates you are to watch over your spirits, avoiding, as fire, all clamor and contention ; being swift to hear, slow to speak ; in honor every one preferring

another before himself. 6. If you cannot relieve, do not grieve the poor. Give them soft words, if nothing else. . . . Let them be glad to come, even though they should go empty away. Put yourselves in the place of every poor man, and deal with him as you would God should deal with you."—*Works*, vol. v, pp. 486, 487.

Such is the work of our stewards, and such the spirit they need to execute it. It is intensely religious, though somewhat secular. Caring for the necessary expenses of the altar and the worship of God, often brings them in conflict with covetousness, and is, therefore, unpleasant, but it is indispensable. Somebody must do it or our altar fires will go out. Many have no ability, no tact ; they are not fit for it, could not do it if it were to save their souls. They are too timid, too slow. They have no influence. Others have special adaptation, and can perform the work under whatever embarrassments. Let them have the office, whether male or female. We have some female leaders, and even preachers ; may we not have female stewards as well and be the gainers by it ?

#### OF THE SUPPORT OF PREACHERS.

Though it devolves on the Quarterly Conference to determine the "amount necessary to

furnish a comfortable support to the preacher," (see Discipline, ¶ 349,) the stewards, being charged with raising the necessary supplies, have great influence over the question, to make the amount more or less. In the exuberance of their love, they may make it so much as to embarrass themselves and the people too ; or, under other influences, they may make it so small as to impress the preacher that he is not appreciated and not wanted. In settling this question, stewards, and, indeed, all the members of the Quarterly Conference, should remember that this is a point upon which a modest preacher, especially if a stranger, as is generally the case, cannot express all that he thinks and feels. The least indication from him that he is seeking for money will injure his influence. However needy, therefore, he will feel compelled to say but little. They should also remember that a lower estimate than his necessities or the circumstances of the people require shows "sharp practice," and will be likely to discourage and disqualify him for the best service of which he is capable. Ministers can live on short allowance, and be efficient where it is necessary ; but when required to do so to gratify the avarice of their officials, they must be more than human not to be oppressed by it.

We knew a case in point several years since. A young minister ventured to get married at the end of his third year, and was sent to a Church of more than ordinary wealth. The Quarterly Conference, otherwise the stewards, took advantage of that circumstance, as the Discipline then permitted, and allowed him no quarterage for his wife. They hired him rooms in an old out-of-the-way house, that had stood the storms of one hundred years at least, to save rent, and figured down the other expenses on the most economical scale, and, to cap the climax, they required him to keep a faithful account of any little presents he should receive, that they might be charged against him in the settlement.

But in guarding against such economy (?) in the estimate, we would not be understood to encourage excess. The sentiment involved in the prayer of Agur is not inappropriate to ministers. (Prov. xxx, 8, 9.) They generally do best when kept about midway between poverty and riches, so that they may have enough to meet their reasonable expenses, and contribute to all the charities they shall urge upon the people without going in debt, and without solicitude, or any necessity for personal speculations.

## OF TRAVELING EXPENSES.

The first duty of the stewards on receiving a new preacher is to pay his *traveling* and moving expenses in coming to them. It often happens that preachers have to *borrow* the money to get to their new charge. This should be paid without delay. It has nothing to do with the forthcoming estimate or salary. It is simply so much money paid out by him, and should be refunded immediately. This ought to be provided for in advance.

## OF PRESENTS.

If you or the people carry the preacher anything, whether food, fuel, or clothing, which he has not ordered or agreed to purchase, never charge it against his salary, or credit it on any one's subscription. Call all such contributions *presents*, and not sales, and never mention them in paying subscriptions, or figuring up expenses.

But if the preacher purchases any of these things of his people on account of their subscriptions, let him give them a receipt for the purchase price of them, to be credited on account, and let that receipt be immediately delivered to the treasurer, the same as so much

money in the usual way of payment, whether by the leaders, collectors, or through envelopes.

Looking at the whole subject in the light of considerable experience, we deem the following propositions worthy of careful consideration :—

#### I. STEWARDS MUST DEAL FAIRLY.

They well know the object of their appointment. If there are reasons why they cannot conscientiously do the work, they should resign. Or, if they have prejudices which they cannot, or will not, conquer, and that will neutralize their energy, it is better for them to vacate. Like some other offices, the stewardship is powerful for evil as well as good, and has sometimes sacrificed what it is intended to protect. Take the following case as an illustration :—

Mr. A. was a leading steward, and had settled opinions in regard to the next preacher, asking for one whom he knew could not be appointed without a flagrant violation of our itinerant arrangements, and predicting the destruction of the Society if his wishes were denied. They could not be granted, of course, and a stranger was sent. Mr. A. was delegated by the Society to make the collections, and pay all expenses as they accrued. But, hoping to bring his prediction to pass, and *punish* the

bishops for their impudence in non-compliance with his independent predilections, he asked for no money, and paid none for three or four months, when the pastor, to expose the plot, requested the Church to excuse him from further service, basing his request on the ground of their incompetence to support a married preacher. This brought Mr. A. to give an account of his stewardship, and revealed the fact that he had asked no man for a dollar, and had not paid the preacher one cent. To settle the question of competence, before voting on the subject an indignant Church ordered a paper to be laid upon the table, and requested every one to subscribe what he would give. Nearly the whole amount was put down in a few minutes, and, of course, the pastor remained. But, fortunately, that steward never recovered from his disgrace, and had the mortification of seeing that one Church multiply into *five* stronger ones, almost in sight of its unimposing location, to say nothing of others in the suburbs.

Now, this is what we call dishonest. Here was a steward, holding an office designed to subserve and promote the Church, who used it, in obedience to his *prejudices*, for quite another purpose. This was a wicked betrayal of trust. When he found that he could not consistently



discharge the duties of the office, he should have stepped aside and given place to another man. Holding office to defeat the known objects of it is sheer knavery, whether in the Church or out of it.

## 2. THEY SHOULD BE IMPARTIAL.

In close connection with prejudice lies partiality, and both are intimately related to honesty. Stewards are sometimes misguided by love, as well as by the want of it. They are active in supporting a *favorite* preacher, seek to get him a liberal estimate, and then to pay it promptly, besides giving him many presents and honorable recognitions. But having one to whom they feel less attached, they talk of *hard* times, *economy*, *restriction*, etc., showing that they are not governed by principle, but by feeling. The result is, one minister is surfeited with attentions, and another is disheartened for the want of them. And what aggravates some such cases is, that the cruel prejudice involved is the result of ministerial integrity, restraining the stewards or others from improper practices, while the love involved is equally undeserved, arising from the frivolity and worldliness of the preacher who enjoys its benefactions. Great injustice is often experienced in these matters,

and it may not always be in the power of stewards to prevent it.

### 3. PUNISHMENT IS NO PART OF A STEWARD'S DUTY.

The point we wish to emphasize here is, that it is no part of a steward's duty to punish his minister, however faulty. He may tell him in kindness what he thinks wrong in him, but should not punish him by withholding his pay, or neglecting the proper means to secure it, should he happen to differ with him in opinion. Nor is it his province to do this even if he should commit a crime against God. In this case it would become his duty to report him to the presiding elder, who would call him to account before his peers. He certainly ought not to take judgment into his own hands and punish him without judge or jury by withholding his support.

But we do not mean to insinuate that it may never be proper for Church officials, in their associate capacity, to withhold ministerial claims. We believe that circumstances may occur to justify this extreme method of correcting manifest wrongs, but it should not be adopted until all milder means have been exhausted.

And, while speaking of paying ministers, it

may not be amiss to mention those who are occasionally employed as supplies for one service or more. Now, that compensation for such labor is customary in certain sections, and especially if your Church has practically indorsed it ; but if, for some reason you desire a brother to preach for you *gratuitously*, and pay his own traveling expenses, you should so inform him at the outset. For, if he knows that you have paid others for similar service, and especially if you *promise* to pay him, and fail to do so, even to the amount of his fares, it may throw a shade of suspicion over his mind that you are not entirely honorable, and possibly, that you are hardly honest. A good reputation is sometimes very useful to a Church, as well as to an individual ; and it is never best to hurt the feelings of a brother when you can avoid it. No amount of flattery can fully compensate for such indiscretions, especially in a Church that is able, and deals liberally with its pastor in the way of presents and vacations. The golden rule furnishes a safe guide in this case, as in most others. (See Discipline, ¶¶ 353, 354.)

### 3. STEWARDS SHOULD DEAL FAIRLY WITH THE POOR.

It is easier to give to some people than to others of equal merit. All almoners of the Church's bounty need to guard against the errors here suggested. Stewards in following their sober judgment will often be obliged to act against their feelings. They hold a tender trust, involving much labor and embarrassment, but it is one of high importance to the Church. Methodists were distinguished at the first by their sympathy for the poor. The "Holy Club" at Oxford began their missionary work in prisons, almshouses, barracks, and other places most neglected. The first Methodist preacher in Australia was an Irish convict, converted to God while waiting for execution, but afterward banished to that country. Our Church wealth has largely come from labors for the poor. Stewards who ply their official vocation among this class of people lay up treasure for Methodism on earth, as well as for themselves in heaven. They at once come under the best promises of the God of both Testaments. If Methodism ever dies it will be by turning away from this work. The stewards, therefore, have a most important trust. God help them to honor it!

#### 4. THE SOCIAL AND SPIRITUAL DUTIES OF STEWARDS ARE IMPERATIVE.

They should not dream that their work is limited to feeding the hungry and clothing the naked. There are other poor—multitudes of them, strangers and foreigners, who ask not alms, but recognition, acquaintance, *sympathy*, *respect*. They want to know that they are *loved*. They ask your hand, a kind look, a friendly word, and they will reward it all. Long years ago we approached a youth, a child of the sea, in his tarpaulin, surrounded with sin, and whispered words of hope and kindness in his ear, and took him into the church. We have often thought of our first sight of him, and of what followed, and wished that we might hear something more of his history. A few months since he approached us, a venerable looking gentleman, a man of wealth, a Christian, and a Methodist. God has tens of thousands of such unfortunates awaiting our smile and friendly embrace.

Many of our Churches are poor. Trustees and stewards have a hard struggle to pay expenses. They long for the coming of a few rich members, or for a mine to open at their feet. Here they have both. The poor are our in-

heritance. If properly cultivated, they will furnish us men and means for all time to come. The writer has had the honor of advising in the construction of two *wills* disposing of nearly two millions of dollars, the honest earnings of two lone orphans, converted to God and Methodism in their poverty. And this amount was only what was left, after disbursing hundreds of thousands of dollars to other objects.

#### 5. STEWARDS SHOULD BE HEROIC.

It is important, though not, perhaps, wonderful, that they sometimes get in the way of complaining, pleading poverty, and preaching unbelief, thinking, probably, that it will improve the collections. But this is a miserable way of begging. We never knew a church to thrive on official whining. Most Churches have a few members of this stripe, and, however uninfluential, their moanings are distressing. They are always prophesying evil. They live, and move, and have their being in "Lamentations." Pious worrying is chronic with them.

But this will not do for stewards. They must keep sunny and hopeful, have faith in God for all reasonable attainments. No desponding man can be efficient. Heroism is inspiring.

The writer's first attempt at begging was undertaken in the interest of trustees who coveted death, and expected to be buried in a few months. When he attempted to cheer the treasurer of the board, and told him he would pay the debt, the idea seemed so ridiculous that he nearly insulted him, which only sent a *thrill* of purpose through his young soul to *do* it. In a few weeks he had the money in his pocket, canceled the bond and delivered it to the disconsolate official, who could hardly believe his own eyes.

Stewards may be blamed, but they must never be disheartened. If one project fails, let them try another. If Church members are poor or stingy, go to the world. Go to them any way, and show them what the Church is doing for them in educating their children, protecting their property, and enhancing its value. If *you* don't succeed, send your wife, or some one else. Let all the people understand that you are alive, and in earnest, and "mean business." There is an honest way to every man's heart and pocket. It is the business of stewards to find it and enter. You will often need something of the spirit of David when "he moved" on Goliath, and you will have it if you believe that you are working for God, and look to him for guidance, and success.

Heroism is nearly as necessary in taking a plate collection as in soliciting subscriptions. We are not surprised that so little is obtained in some congregations in this way. It is not difficult to see that the collector is ashamed of his business. He goes hurrying from pew to pew, presenting his plate to but now and then an individual, as much as to say that he expects nothing from most of them; whereas he should place it squarely before each one, and let all understand that the collection is a legitimate part of the worship and must be treated with respect. A little practice of this kind will soon bring a penny, at least, from every worshiper, and improve your finances.

#### 6. STEWARDS SHOULD ACT RELIGIOUSLY.

Financial duties are as religious as preaching, and should be prosecuted with prayer. Peter was as true to Christ when he went a fishing to get money to pay taxes, as when he "lifted up his voice" on the day of Pentecost, (Matt. xvii, 27.) Stewards often fail because they let down the standard of piety the moment they begin to talk of money, and sometimes crack a joke when they should urge a duty and a privilege. If they would ask men to give, as they ask



them to repent, solemnly, religiously, and without compromising their own integrity or that of the Church, they would seldom fail when the expenses are not unreasonably out of proportion to the population. Where they are so they should be reduced at the earliest possible moment, that there may be no necessity for betraying Christ into the hands of sinners to meet them.

7. STEWARDS SHOULD ALSO SET AN EXAMPLE  
OF NOBLE LIBERALITY.

No contracted, covetous man ought to be allowed in this office, for the reason that his talk and example will embarrass its objects, more than his contributions and eloquence will help them. The masses naturally follow the leaders, especially if they go in the direction of covetousness. A close, whining, desponding steward is a curse to any Church, especially if he is rich. Methodism has had a few of that sort, most of whom have finished their economizing career. We have known several who have erred in the other direction; they gave too much, rather than ask others to give. The true policy is to have all, saints and sinners, from the youngest child in Sunday-school to the oldest and poorest widow, give a little, give what they can afford. They will feel the better

for it, and it will train them to the *habit* of giving and make easier work for the generations to come. Besides, "many hands make light work," and supersede the necessity of ringing the changes every Sabbath about money.

*Finally*, as to the best plan of procedure to obtain contributions, we must speak with some degree of caution. Circumstances alter cases. We have no doubt that many Churches are embarrassed simply for the want of a *wise* plan. When the expenses are to be met by renting pews the difficulty is less, though often enhanced by neglect in making the collections. In most places pew rent should be collected in monthly installments, first, because it is easier to pay it in that way, and, secondly, because it will enable the trustees, or stewards, as the case may be, to pay the preacher and other creditors monthly. It is ruinous to a Church to be *lax* in its payments. No preacher wants to be its pastor to run in debt for food and fuel, and thus dishonor himself and his people, and few can prevent doing so unless they get their salary monthly. It is hard work to sustain a Church that has acquired a bad name in the community, and this arises more frequently from improper financiering than from poverty.

## CHAPTER V.

### METHODS OF MEETING CURRENT EXPENSES.

THE too common plan of taking annual subscriptions usually fails to secure the amount needed, and necessitates *extra* efforts to make up the deficiency. Another defect of this plan is, it often leaves the *time* and mode of payment optional with each subscriber, which is a pretty sure guarantee that the money will not be produced in season to meet the demands of the cause. Therefore in going to a new charge many years ago, which had pursued this course, and was always behind in its payments, the preacher projected

#### A FINANCIAL PLAN,

which has since been adopted by many Societies to their great advantage. It was substantially as follows :—

1. That the officials, embracing the trustees, stewards, and leaders, should make a liberal estimate of the amount necessary to pay all the expenses of the year, covering every thing, salaries, interest, insurance, repairs, etc.

2. That they should then estimate their reg-

ular income from pews, collections, etc., which being deducted from the estimated expenses would show the amount to be provided for, as per the following example, modified to represent existing necessities :—

Pastor's Salary.....	\$1,000 00
Rent of Parsonage.....	200 00
Furniture for Parsonage.....	60 00
For the Poor of the Church.....	200 00
For Sacramental Purposes.....	15 00
Presiding Elder's Allowance.....	50 00
Assessment for the Bishops.....	50 00
Sexton.....	150 00
Water Rent.....	10 00
Insurance on Church.....	40 00
Interest on the Debt.....	150 00
Reduction of Debt.....	200 00
Light and Fuel.....	150 00
Repairs.....	75 00
For Incidentals and Shrinkages.....	300 00
Total Expenses.....	<u>\$2,650 00</u>

#### PROSPECTIVE INCOME.

From Collections.....	\$250 00
From Pew Rents and Taxes.....	500 00
Total.....	<u>\$750 00</u>
Total amount to be supplied.....	\$1,900 00

3. The third suggestion was that a large committee of thirty or forty persons be appointed in the public congregation, embracing church members and others, who should meet together

and *apportion* among the regular attendants the whole sum required, according to their best judgment.

4. That said committee should then notify each individual named in the apportionment what they had done, by a circular reading nearly as follows :—

DEAR SIR: The Committee appointed to apportion the amount necessary for the support of the ——— Methodist Episcopal Church for the present year among its members and the congregation, have concluded, after due deliberation, that you can afford and will be willing to pay the sum of ——— dollars. If you acquiesce in this conclusion you will please to pay the same in monthly installments, inclosing the amount in an envelope, writing your name, with the amount inclosed, upon the outside, and depositing the same in the basket or box on the first Sabbath in each month, when it will be passed around in the church to receive these monthly payments. If you demur at the apportionment you will please inform A. B., our treasurer, immediately, stating to him what amount you will pay in the manner aforesaid.

Yours truly, for the committee,

C. D., *Secretary.*



The subscribers' names, with the amount of their annual subscriptions and monthly payments, being thus alphabetically entered in the treasurer's book, he could see in a moment who were in arrears, and by running up the payments of each month could tell the sum total received. Another part of the arrangement required that delinquents should be promptly visited. And to be able to verify his accounts, should they be questioned, the treasurer kept the envelopes to the end of the year.

The plan also embraced the opening of a new ledger, as follows :—

E. D., TREASURER, IN ACCOUNT WITH — M. E. CHURCH.

May 5.	Received from envelopes.....	\$230 05
“ “	Received from Collections, loose..	5 70
May 6.	Paid Pastor.....	\$83 34
“ “	Paid Sexton.....	16 67
“ “	Paid for Oil.....	8 00

This account may be kept on one page, or the receipts may be entered on the right hand page and the payments on the left, which will give room for more particularity, and be less liable to mistakes.

After this it only remained for the pastor to announce the collection, and the stewards to take it. The result was, the treasurer immediately had money to pay every demand monthly.

The first year was closed out of debt for current expenses, and with money in the treasury. The second year ended in like manner, without making the least extra effort.

We have encountered many plans since, but have found none better. It makes no difference whether the legal responsibility of paying the bills rests on the trustees or stewards, whether the regular income from rents, collections, etc., is one quarter, one half, or three quarters of the sum needed, this is an easy and equitable way of providing for the deficiency on the start, and it generally supersedes the necessity of extraneous and harassing exertions to raise supplies.

It has the advantage, too, of interesting the whole congregation. It makes every one feel that he belongs to the concern, and justly proud in hearing the annual report, that *WE*—not the trustees or stewards merely, but *we*—have done so nobly.

Another advantage of it is, it takes the current expenses out of the way of our benevolences. Officials cannot feel free to make much of an effort for benevolent collections while they are sadly in arrears for current expenses. Nor can the people be very liberal toward outside interests while they are groaning under a late



galvanic operation to raise money to pay the preacher, or while they anticipate something of the sort to make up deficiencies.

We might add, it obviates one of the most mortifying circumstances connected with the presiding eldership, namely, the *collection*. By bringing his claim into the general expense, and providing for it as you do for the other expenses, that is, by obtaining a trifle from each individual member and friend in the manner proposed, nobody feels it, and this officer is spared the humiliation of witnessing a public drill to collect his allowance, or of receiving it from the scanty pocket of the preacher. In a word, the plan has been generally adopted in some parts of the Church, and is justifying all we have said in its favor.

#### A LATER METHOD SUGGESTED.

A modification of the foregoing arrangement has been lately adopted by a new Society, which seemed quite unable to pay its expenses. Having only a small congregation, it waived the *apportionment*, and circulated cards asking the people to subscribe the amount they would pay for the year in *weekly* installments. We insert a copy of the card, for the benefit of any who may be disposed to adopt it, as follows :—

..... Methodist Episcopal Church,  
 ..... New York.

About \$4,000 is required yearly from this Church for the support and spread of the Gospel. This is needed to meet the claims of the Pastor and Presiding Elder, to pay for house rent and furniture, interest, insurance, and sexton; to furnish coal, light, etc.

Each member of the congregation is expected to do his part in this work, as God shall give ability. You will please, therefore, fill the blanks in the following pledge and put it on the plate :

....., 1875.

*Until May 1st, 1876, I agree to pay for the support of the  
 —— M. E. Church —— Dollar —— Cents per week,  
 payable at the Church on each Sabbath.*

*Name.....*

*Residence.....*

These cards were placed in the pews, and are there now, to be read by all comers. As they were filled out they were put on the plates, and thus passed into the hands of the treasurer. The sums subscribed ranged from one cent to five dollars, there being only one card containing the last amount named. Each of the subscribers was immediately furnished with fifty-two little cheap envelopes, one for each Sabbath, and requested to inclose his subscription, write his name on the envelope, and put it in the basket. Nearly all the children subscribed, and became so interested in the preparation of their

envelopes, that their parents could not easily forget their own. The result was astonishing. The subscriptions were numerous, the money was forthcoming, and the officers knew every week just how they stood. The first report was particularly interesting.

Where the pews are free, weekly payments will probably prove most successful. But for permanent congregations, whether in the city or out, we favor the *apportioning* plan—

1. Because many will *subscribe* nothing, being too proud to write a small sum.

2. Because some, being covetous, will write less than they ought.

3. Because a few will write more than they can afford, and never pay it.

4. Because, if done kindly and prudently it will give better satisfaction. Most men would rather pay fifty cents per week, knowing that to be their full proportion, than half the amount and be reproached for not paying more.

The beauty of these schemes is seen—

1. In that they provide for the annual expenses at the commencement of the year.

2. In that they conveniently furnish the money to meet them as they accrue.

3. In that they prevent the necessity of hard and frequent begging in the congregation, which

cannot fail to keep some people, both rich and poor, away from the house of God.

4. In that they supersede the necessity of festivals, concerts, and dramatic exhibitions, which, defend them as we may, are most damaging to the spiritual interest of the Church.

The Roman Catholics fell from grace by establishing theaters, lotteries, balls, festivals, shows, etc., to raise money to meet expenses. No Church, however holy, can cater to the world in this manner and retain its spiritual power.

But there is no need of doing this. If our Church officers will take a firm stand, adopt some sensible plan of finance, and resign sooner than resort to worldly tricks and amusements to obtain funds, they will have no lack ; and sinners are too clear sighted to follow professors of religion for spiritual benefit who are no better than themselves. If they are about to die, and desire advice and prayers, they will not send for the man whom they met at the last pleasure party, though he may be a steward or leader. One of the first demands of Christ is, that we come out from the world and be separate. We believe most Methodists deprecate our tendency to worldly complications, and only tolerate them from what seems to be sheer necessity. In our opinion this necessity is fictitious,

and would generally vanish before a proper financial policy.

#### A POSSIBLE OBJECTION.

It may be objected that these plans are not adapted to circuits embracing several congregations, however appropriate to stations. So it may appear at the first glance, but is it true in fact? Suppose there are five congregations in a circuit, we would suggest that the Quarterly Conference, composed of representatives from each, determine how much is needed in the manner before indicated, and then *apportion* it to each of the congregations, according to their several ability. This done, the local officers of each may add to the apportionment so much as is necessary for strictly local purposes, and then proceed to secure the whole by one of the plans named, as they may judge most appropriate, to be paid *weekly or monthly*, in envelopes, at some one regular preaching service whenever held. And we see no reason why these same plans may not be extended to isolated classes, in which case the envelopes may be handed to the leader instead of being deposited in the box. This will secure a weekly or monthly payment, and overcome the prevailing tendency to postpone till the close of the year.

In officially visiting an appointment several years since, embracing a number of classes within five miles of the church, the pastor informed me that he was distressed for the want of money, and that "if he were to receive a letter informing him of his own mother's death, he could not pay the postage on it." Knowing the people, I was not disappointed, and told him I would bring up the subject in the Quarterly Conference, and wanted him to state just what he had said to me. He did so, when I proposed a little plan to be carried out in the several classes *immediately*, which brought deliverance the next Sabbath. Calling at his house on Monday morning to learn the result, he soon entered, exclaiming to his wife, with manifest rapture, "I am a happy man ; I have paid all my debts, and have fifty dollars in my pocket."

The embarrassment that good man had suffered was intense, and it was all *unnecessary*. The people were able to supply his wants, and intended to do it, but they had no effective plan of operation. Either of the methods suggested would have done it promptly, and paying in small sums the people would not have felt it. The poorest of them would have paid ten cents a week, though it might have shocked them to think of giving five dollars at one time.

Romanists are wiser than Protestants in this respect. They build their splendid churches and cathedrals, support their schools and other costly institutions, by these little weekly collections. They do not get all they want nor all they ask, but they get something from every one *weekly*, and they begin to make collections for their churches long before they lay their foundations, and work on as fast as they get the means to pay the bills. Here lies their financial strength. Though we have not the same power over our people that they have over theirs, we have enough influence to collect all that we really need.

THE SCHEME AN ANCIENT ONE.

We may add, this plan is apostolic. "Upon the first day of the week," says St. Paul, "*let every one* of you lay by him in store, as God hath prospered him, that there be no gatherings when I come." (1 Cor. xvi, 2.) He wanted the giving done on *principle*, and not under excitement; and by *system*, that it might not interfere with his special, spiritual mission. And so does every presiding elder and minister, and it is best for all concerned that it should be so.

## ON CLASS COLLECTIONS.

Collections through the classes are of long standing, and may be most appropriate in some cases. But even where these are preferred, we should advise the apportionment, or card system, recommended, with weekly or monthly payments. "Notes on demand are *never* due." The Quarterly Conference, or board, having decided how much each class ought to raise, let the leader divide it among his members, asking them to pay in weekly installments, or let him give each a card of the kind before mentioned and get their subscriptions. If they do not attend class, let him visit them, or have some one do so, or send them a card by mail, any way to have the matter settled at once.

The objection to class collections is, it *limits* the giving to the Church. But this can be obviated by sending the cards or apportionment and the envelope to outsiders, who will help if properly approached. The cause demands courage, faith, and work, and with these appliances it cannot fail.

## THESE VIEWS CONFIRMED.

Since writing the above we have received an excellent letter from Rev. M. D. Collins, presid-



ing elder of Boonsborough District, Des Moines Conference, confirmatory of nearly every point. He justly emphasizes the importance of a thorough organization of the stewards, by the election of a president, secretary, and treasurer at the commencement of the year; that they meet once a month at least; keep a faithful record of their proceedings and accounts, and urges all parties to a vigorous discharge of their duties, on the best plan they can devise. He says, "The wise men of Gotham did not commit a worse folly when they went to sea in a bowl, than Stewards do when they set out on a year's work without a *plan*."

## CHAPTER VI.

## OF CLASS LEADERS.

## THEIR DUTIES AND QUALIFICATIONS.

THE office of class leader, like most of the peculiarities of Methodism, was providentially suggested. "I was talking," says Mr. Wesley, "with several of the Society at Bristol concerning the means of paying the debts there, when one stood up and said, 'Let every member of the Society give a *penny* a week till all is paid. Another answered, 'But many are poor, and cannot afford to do it.' 'Then,' said he, 'put eleven of the poorest with me, and if they cannot give any thing, well, I will call on them weekly, and if they can give nothing, I will give for them as well as for myself. And each of you can call on eleven of your neighbors weekly ; receive what they give, and make up what is wanting.' It was done."

Thus, the office was originally established as a financial measure. But in carrying it into effect these collectors discovered that some members of the Society did not live as they ought. "It struck me immediately," says Mr. Wesley, "this is the thing, the very thing we

have wanted so long." He, therefore, called on all the collectors, and requested each to make particular "inquiry into the behavior of those whom they saw weekly. They did so. Many disorderly walkers were detected. Some turned from the evil of their ways. Some were put away from us. Many saw it with fear, and rejoiced unto God with reverence." (*Wesley's Works*, vol. vii, pp. 316, 350.)

Thus the office came to embrace *spiritual and pastoral* functions as well as financial, which soon led to the weekly meeting of the members for religious conversation and prayer, and finally to ministerial and governmental responsibilities. With us it is the duty of a leader,

"I. To see each person in his class once a week at least; in order, 1. To inquire how their *souls* prosper. 2. To advise, reprove, comfort, or exhort, as occasion may require. 3. To receive what they are willing to give toward the relief of the preachers, Church, and poor.

"II. To meet the ministers and the stewards of the Society once a week; in order, 1. To inform the minister of any that are sick, or of any that walk disorderly, and will not be reproved. 2. To pay the stewards what they have received

of their several classes in the week preceding.” (*Discipline*, ¶ 30.)

It is the duty of a leader also to watch over the members of his class, not only to see how they outwardly observe the rules of the Church, but how they grow “in the knowledge and love of God.” And that his labors may be effective he is required to converse frequently and freely with his pastor, and to report the condition of his class at each meeting of the Quarterly Conference. (*Discipline*, ¶ 57.)

The high responsibility of leaders is further indicated by the facts that they are members of the Quarterly Conference, and of the leaders and stewards’ meeting, which have governmental control over all the affairs of the Church, both temporal and spiritual. Besides, no one can be admitted into full connection in the Church, except on their recommendation. (*Discipline*, ¶ 93, 175.)

In view of their financial trusts, Mr. Southey calls them tax-gatherers, and compares them to non-commissioned officers in the army, and pronounces our “spiritual policy perfect,” in view of the wonderful adaptation of this office to its grand purposes. Bishops Coke and Asbury declare in their notes on the Discipline, “every leader is in some degree a *gospel minis-*

*ter.* The revival of the work of God does, perhaps, depend as much upon the whole body of the leaders as it does upon the whole body of the preachers." As they are sub-pastors under the preacher in charge to watch over and feed that part of his flock committed to their care, it is reasonable that he should appoint and advise them, and also to dismiss them when they prove themselves unfaithful or incompetent. (*Emory's Hist. of Dis.*, p. 380.)

#### OF THEIR QUALIFICATIONS.

In view of the duties and responsibilities involved, it is not difficult to perceive that class leaders need to possess many excellences of character.

1. They should be men of manifest integrity. In contributing, many people desire to know that what they contribute will go to the object for which it is given. They will not readily respond to any call, however urgent, where they have reason to distrust the integrity of the solicitor. In the financial department of a leader's duties, he ought to hold himself above suspicion, by making full and prompt returns to the stewards. In these days of defalcation, good men cannot be too careful in the management of finances.

2. They should be *prompt*. A laggard will never make a useful leader. Leaders should never miss a meeting without furnishing a substitute, or fail to open and close one at the time proposed. Members will soon learn to be tardy if the leader is so, and to stay away if he continues the service beyond the ordinary time of dismissal.

They should be prompt, too, in looking after absentees. Many members have been lost to the Church, and, perhaps, to heaven itself, by leaders delaying to visit this class of their members. Becoming discouraged, or being necessarily detained by sickness or other means, and hearing nothing from the leader or the Church, they have concluded that they are not respected, and have sometimes fallen into sin, or gone to another Church that manifested interest in their welfare. If leaders cannot immediately visit delinquents, they ought to enlist some one else to do it, and show that they are alive to their responsibility. Or, if this is impracticable, they should write them kindly, and invite them to their next meeting. Mr. Farnell, an English leader who was much occupied with business, had a printed card which he used to send to all absentees in an envelope. It read as follows :—

Mr. Farnell's kind regards, and will be very happy to see you at class on Tuesday next, at eight o'clock in the evening, in No. 1 Vestry, Bold-st.

On the opposite side was printed the significant invitation, "Come thou with us, and we will do thee good." Num. x, 29.

3. They should be exceedingly careful, also, of their moral deportment, avoiding the very *appearance* of evil. They are pastors and teachers in an important sense, and must set an example which it will be safe and profitable for others to follow. It is not enough for them to be moral and respectable according to the standards of the world, they must repudiate all doubtful associations and practices on every question, and place themselves above suspicion. Some very respectable leaders have injured their influence by too free and easy habits growing out of their other connections. Whether the practices involved are justifiable under some circumstances is not the question. Public sentiment, to say nothing of the word of God, condemns them in a religious teacher.

Leaders who do not renounce the world, the flesh, and the devil, as they proposed to do when

they joined the Church, cannot expect to succeed. No class exercise can possibly create confidence in the sincerity of such leaders. They should be just as careful of their conduct as they require their minister to be of his, if they will have power with God and do good to men. They cannot afford to be imprudent men.

4. They must be equally particular to maintain a right spirit. The spirit of the world is light and trifling. It puts aside all considerations of death, judgment, and eternity, and courts fun and frolic. The spirit of religion is sober, not sad ; it is reflective and devout. Our opinions of men are formed as much by the spirit they manifest as by their conduct. Nobody can have confidence in a joking, frivolous leader. He shows clearly that he has no sense of God's presence, or any real communion with him. And his class, and even wicked men, will think, when they hear him talk about religion, that the blind is attempting to lead the blind. "Watch and be sober," is God's command to the children of light. A Christian teacher "must be blameless, vigilant, sober, of good behavior, not a brawler, not double-tongued, and have a good report of them which are without." All this is necessary to give him



influence over those whom he would teach, and lead to heaven.

It is necessary also to endow him for his duties. One cannot indulge in the evils suggested without feeling that he is "*wanting*." He cannot have the witness of the Spirit that he is accepted of God. "For this is the love of God, that we keep his commandments, and his commandments are not grievous." Nor can he feel deeply interested in the spiritual prosperity of his class. A leader, to be interesting, must be in Christ, and have Christ in him; a well of water springing up into everlasting life.

5. It is desirable, too, that leaders be well-informed as to the doctrines, practice, and experience of religion. If they have been soundly converted, as the result of repentance toward God, and faith in our Lord Jesus Christ, they know something of the highest importance, that can only be learned by experience. If they moved forward from that brilliant beginning, growing in grace, in the knowledge of the truth, and in the comforts of the Holy Ghost, they know more that will wonderfully inspire and direct them in their work.

A leader must understand God's plan of dealing with men, what he proposes to do for them,

here and now, and on what conditions he will do it. His own experience, if clear and satisfactory, will help him on these points, as well as the word of God, and the experiences of others. He will need, however, to guard against mistakes, or he may stumble into legality on the one hand, requiring impossible works and feelings; or into looseness on the other, accounting professors dear children of God, though they live in actual sin. How difficult it is to teach faith and works in their proper places and proportions, so as to reap the conscious benefit of the atonement at once and go in peace. Christians often get badly befogged on these points, and drift about among the rocks and shoals of error and unbelief for days, and even weeks, and require a skillful leader to give them the right reckoning and restore them to their proper course. We remember with what avidity we used to run to our first leader with the accumulated troubles of the week, and how they vanished under his skillful touch. One needs to be intimate with the heavenly Father, to read his word carefully and prayerfully, and to talk much with Christians of mature experience, in order to meet all the questions that will be presented for solution by a thriving class.

Leaders should also understand the devil and his wiles, the difference between temptation and sin, that the temporary absence of joy does not prove sin, and should not disturb faith in God, or confidence in his love to us, so long as we remain loyal to his commands. But they should not so apologize for darkness and stupidity as to make their members content without light. The normal condition of the Christian is that of "love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance." Gal. v, 22. The loss of any one of these divine virtues should lead us to Jesus in prayer, till it be restored. It is no part of a leader's business to satisfy his members without the witness of the Spirit, or without "being rooted and grounded in love," so as "to comprehend with all saints what is the breadth, and length, and depth, and height; and to know the love of Christ, which passeth knowledge, and be filled with all the fullness of God." Eph. iii, 17-19. Yet he may find it necessary to comfort and encourage them under temptation before they reach this fullness, and even afterward.

The *flesh* furnishes another branch of study for leaders in almost every sense in which the word can be properly used. It is the source of many evils that are often traced to other causes.

"They that are Christ's have crucified the flesh with the affections and lusts." Gal. v, 24. Still they are liable to be tempted and carried away from God.

This is a dangerous point, as it is not always easy to perceive the exact line of demarkation between what is admissible and what not. In all questions of this sort our only safe course is to lean hard toward God, and give him the benefit of our doubt. That is, if abstinence is surely not wrong, and indulgence may be, we should abstain, for he that doubteth in such a case is condemned, because he takes the risk of becoming a transgressor.

Leaders ought also to understand the *world* as well as the flesh and the devil. The natural man cleaves to it, covets its pleasures, honors, amusements, social advantages and approval, but this is all wrong. God's explicit command is, "Be *not* conformed to the world : but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect will of God." Rom. xii, 2. And knowing that there is no safety in social intermingling with sinners, he adds : "Come out from among them, and be ye separate, . . . and touch not the unclean thing, and I will receive you." 2 Cor. vi, 17. Leaders need all the wis-

dom and grace they can command to keep their members from being overcome by this means. They should be fully armed with the word of God, which declares, "If any man love the world, the love of the father is not in him." 1 John ii, 15.

But it is not necessary to particularize. Leaders who read the Bible to get the mind of God, and our books bearing directly on the subjects of duty and experience, and put themselves in the way of learning from others, can hardly fail to become masters. But those who have the best acquaintance with the Bible in its relations to human nature, will have the advantage of all others. This is a magazine of facts and thought that never fails to furnish something appropriate.

Of human books, to assist leaders, one called "Seed Thought," arranged by the late Rev. Geo. Robinson, and published by Nelson & Phillips, is, in our opinion, among the best. It brings together a variety of Scriptures with observations, by eminent men, on almost every point of interest, and marks numerous Scripture examples of each topic. Besides, it indicates several hymns expressive of the sentiment under consideration, and saves time that may be lost in searching for one appropriate to be sung.

In a word, any Christian man of fair natural abilities, who knows how to read, can express himself readily and respectably, and is ambitious to succeed, may do so, if he will keep his eyes and ears open to learn, and his heart warm with divine love. The facilities for acquiring knowledge and grace were never so great as at present. But then he must always be looking out to gather up something for his class, something to interest and help them, as a loving father is to benefit his family, or an earnest pastor to feed his flock. No one can excuse himself from this work on account of ignorance, if he will only open his windows and let in the surrounding light. Failure oftener comes from stupidity and spiritual death than from ignorance.

6. We must not fail to mention *sympathy* as another element of effectiveness in a leader. A hard, unfeeling man may make a good sheriff, but he is unfit for any position in the Church of Christ. Sympathy underlies the whole Christian system, and is the power of God unto salvation. It propels the machinery that is redeeming the world from heathenism. Leaders must be full of it. They must weep with those who weep, and for sinners who do not weep, and rejoice with those who rejoice. The sick, poor, and multitudes of children and unfortunate and friendless

adults, are suffering for kind words and feelings. They want to be noticed and loved. Any leader who will strike out and seek after these classes in the spirit of Jesus will have a crowd after him, not merely for the little temporal good he may do them, but for his friendship.

People in better conditions often need sympathy as well. Afflictions of one kind or another come to all, and a bleeding heart courts consolation. A leader who enters into all the interests of his class will command their attendance, though his words may be few and weak.

7. He must be social and companionable, greeting his members in a warm and friendly manner, and not be cold, reserved, and distant. This is the natural expression of sympathy, and it is difficult to make people believe that we feel exactly right without it. One who can cordially shake hands and kindly welcome the approach of his members, will seldom be troubled by absentees. We have had several leaders of this kind, and have been obliged to divide their classes every few months. Such men have so much magnetism, that they will draw around them a crowd any where if you will give them a chance.

But some will say, "I have no capacity for

this ; I cannot be sociable ; I have no heart to shake hands with every body." Then you must do it by *will* power, do it as a duty, do it for Christ's sake and for the sake of souls, that you may please and profit them. "Finally," says St. Peter, "having compassion one of another ; love as brethren, be pitiful, be courteous : knowing that ye are thereunto called, that ye should inherit a blessing."

Our classes and churches are suffering for the want of fraternal recognition, Christian fellowship and hand-shaking. We are too formal and unsocial. Many have already left the Church and gone to the world for *society*. We need a revival of brotherly love and Christian intercourse. Leaders can do much to bring it to pass.

8. But all these qualities are the natural products of spiritual religion, of justification by faith, which gives "peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ," and makes us to "rejoice in the hope of the glory of God." Rom. v, 1-3. One who walks and talks with God will be interested, and will render himself attractive and profitable to others, unless prevented by some erroneous opinions. It is natural for the sun to shine. Leaders may be full of knowledge, but if they have not the love of God shed abroad within



them they cannot be efficient. This is their strength. It is a magnet that will draw all Christian hearts toward them. With this it is easy to be good, and gentle, and sympathetic. A leader who is consciously happy in God, will be likely to have a full class.

## CHAPTER VII.

HOW TO MAKE A CLASS-MEETING INTERESTING  
' AND PROFITABLE.

ONE of the first conditions of success in class-leading is, that members be at once relieved of all *embarrassment*. They need to feel as *easy* as they usually do in private conversation at their own homes. The constraint of the witness's box in court is not favorable to the utterance of "the whole truth," or to the reception of good advice. Timid people dislike the position, however much they may know, and will never occupy it unless compelled. It is on this ground that many are opposed to class-meetings. They are *terrified* the moment they enter the room, if not before, and can neither think nor feel naturally. Of course they are not in a good state of mind either to speak or to hear.

## HOW TO PREPARE A CLASS FOR ACTION.

How to relieve a class-meeting of this embarrassment is a question that we may not be able to solve. Something must be done to exclude the idea of a formal public meeting, and to socialize it. We will suggest,

1. That the leader, on entering the room, shake hands with all present, calling them by name, and giving them a cordial greeting ; and that he do the same with others who shall come before the services are opened. 2. That he commence with less formality, and in a different manner from what is common in public worship. He may do this by making some pertinent remarks while sitting, or by singing a few familiar verses without rising and reading them. 3. That he allow the members to speak *sitting*, if they prefer it, and do the same himself, a part of the time at least. 4. That he allow them to speak at any time they please, and not require them to wait until reached by any regular order. This will be likely to secure "a word in season." 5. That he speak to them miscellaneously, and allow them to respond or not, as they shall please. No one will refuse to answer suitable questions, and this is all that many beginners care to do. 6. That he permit them to ask questions relating to any appropriate point that may be developed in the course of the meeting. This will often render the service completely social, and more interesting and profitable than it could be made by the usual method of speech making.

We tested this plan in our last experience as

leader. Beginning with a very few who ventured in, we took our seat near them, and conducted the exercises in the most informal and social way, making them feel at home. The next week the number was considerably increased, and so it went on until we had *forty* in actual attendance, when other duties called us away. We have since frequented another class which is led much after the same style. It is always full and spiritual. The conversations elicited by the questions of different members are rich and exceedingly profitable, and few ask to be excused from speaking.

Ease and freedom being secured, the next thing is to conduct the exercises in a manner to achieve the best results. What that manner is, is a question about which good men may honestly differ. In settling it, we should never forget that a class-meeting is not a social club, or a literary society, but a means of grace designed to promote the spiritual improvement of its members.

In this view we would suggest the singing of a few verses of a devotional character, and a short opening prayer by the leader or some one else, relating particularly to the members present and absent. It is not a proper time or place, certainly, for a long, rambling prayer. Then, if

the leader has a point to carry, which may be aided by a few well-selected verses of Scripture, let them be read ; but we should not encourage him to spend much time in *discoursing* upon them. He is there to inquire specifically of his members "how their souls prosper," and they are present to answer, desiring, perhaps, to ask him some questions involving their own spiritual welfare, and their time is limited. Preaching is not appropriate to the occasion, however good. Leaders will do better to reserve their time and force until the speaking shall furnish them an important theme. And *we* should prefer to postpone the Scripture readings until called for by the progress of the meeting, and then introduce them to meet the emergencies of the hour.

In relation to the speaking, we agree with the Discipline, that it should be "*voluntary*" and "*conversational*," and so managed as to render the services "fresh, spiritual, and of permanent religious profit." (See ¶¶ 58-61.) This admits of considerable variety, though not favorable to much detail in old experiences or long speeches. The liberty of questioning the leader, which we have encouraged, if not allowed to produce controversy, has a direct tendency toward these results. If he is well informed and ready, it will draw him out in new and in-

teresting lines of thought ; if not, it will be likely to lead him to make the necessary preparation to meet the demand.

But the questioning should not be restricted to the members. To ascertain how their "souls prosper," the leader will need to make some very searching inquiries of them. Our best leaders sometimes ask : "Do you pray in secret every day ? Do you maintain family prayer ? If so, when and how ? with reading the Scriptures and singing, or otherwise ? What are your habits with regard to reading the Bible ?" etc.

These and similar questions probe the real heart and life, and require specific answers ; while the more common ones, such as, "How do you enjoy your mind ?" may be entirely evaded. And they are often indispensable to the objects of the meeting. As religion is made up of *practice*, as well as faith and feeling, the leader needs to know the daily spiritual habits of his members to form a just estimate of their actual condition. Besides, the fact that they are occasionally questioned in this manner can hardly fail to make them more faithful in the discharge of Christian duties.

This opens a broad field, from which the leader will be able to gather something new every week. For instance, he may speak of

love to God at one meeting, inquiring as to its nature, fruits, etc., and what evidence the members find in themselves of their possessing it. It will lead them to careful examination. At another time he may speak of sinful anger, and ascertain what grace is doing for his members on that point. Of evil speaking, too, a sin which is among the last to be overcome, and inquire how many are at fault in that respect. A leader who is himself walking with God, and who commands the love of his class, can do this so tenderly as not to give offense, and help his members greatly in running the Christian race.

We think favorably, also, of leaders occasionally naming some spiritual subject for consideration during the week, and asking the members to be ready to recite some passage of Scripture at the next meeting relating to it, and state what they know about it by experience. This will stimulate to Bible reading, Christian watchfulness, and prayer, and do good in many ways.

It may be well, too, to invite some devout member from time to time to relate his experience for the last week in detail, showing his practice with regard to prayer, study, conversation, the predominant subjects of his meditations, benevolent efforts, temptations, feelings,

etc. This will enable others to understand what he means by a Christian life, and see wherein he or they are wanting. With some people religion consists chiefly in going to "meetings," and participating in their exercises; with others, it seasons and shapes their entire life, public and private, religious and secular. Leaders can often teach better by EXAMPLE than by any words of their own. Judging members by their speeches, we under-estimate some, and over-estimate others. These errors are readily detected when they come to give us the details of their practice. One leader, who instituted the plan of questioning his members on particular points, was wonderfully "taken back," so to speak, in finding that some of his best speakers did not have family prayers, and that several were equally wanting in other respects wherein he supposed them to be models.

The class-meeting is the door through which all candidates are to pass into the Church. It is the fold where sinners are to be gathered and trained for usefulness and heaven. The leader and his class are under-shepherds, who are to go after the wanderers and bring them in. We think it appropriate for the leader, therefore, to ask his members often, if not every week, "What have you done to win souls to Christ,



and secure new members to the class? With how many have you conversed on the subject? What else have you done?" Christians can never have so healthy and rapid a growth as when they are active in saving others. It is then the waters of life flow most freely. We have known some leaders of very moderate talents who have kept their classes crowded by this process the year round, summer and winter. They regarded themselves as captains of fishing crews, and required their members to report their labors at every meeting, when they sent them out anew, inspired for still grander achievements. Thus each hopeful candidate was known to the whole class, and pursued with prayer and kind entreaties.

All these exercises should be interspersed with earnest and appropriate singing, to be started by any one capable of the service, the more extemporaneous and voluntary the better. Circumstances may require the interjection of a prayer or two, to meet some special case of affliction, trial, penitence, or panting after God, that may be developed in course of the meeting.

But we doubt the propriety of devoting one evening in each month entirely to prayer and singing, or to reading *essays*, or to making *set speeches*, or delivering sermons, as some have

done. All these exercises are good in their place, but should not be allowed to subvert the class-meeting. In right hands it needs no such helps. The trouble is to get through with its proper business in the time allotted. If leaders will exercise a little common sense, and take pains to render their classes interesting, they will have no trouble in maintaining them, and no time hanging heavily upon their hands.

If they feel themselves wanting in ability or versatility, let them talk less. Many leaders, like some preachers, talk too much. They begin with an exhortation, reply to every body and every thing, and necessarily become dry and repetitious. They should relieve themselves by asking questions of members who will not feel embarrassed. For instance, Mrs. A. says that she "is filled with the Spirit." Now, instead of replying to her, descanting upon the greatness of her attainments, let him ask her to explain herself, and tell the class just what she means, how that grace affects her temper, her interest in social amusements, her natural pride and ambition, her love of the world, her solicitude for the conversion of sinners, her pleasure in secret prayer, etc. This will give him a grand opportunity to rest and learn something, and her a chance to develop her own experience to

the edification of others. There are some in most classes who may be profitably trusted with such work.

Leaders may often forward their objects by inviting certain of their members, male or female, to speak to a part of their class. This will help them, perhaps please and profit others, and give variety. By a little care, too, they may occasionally bring in a good leader from without, announcing him in advance. It is fitting that the best leaders of every Church should visit all the classes, and help them.

We cannot forbear to mention one other point. The class-meeting in our Church is a training school for beginners in religious life. They there commence to speak and sing, and pray, too, if properly led, and thus improve in confidence and ability until they are able to exercise in a more public manner. Leaders should remember this, and instead of praying themselves, or always inviting old established members to do so, they should bring forward the converts and encourage them to activity. It is pleasant to the older members of a family to hear the little ones try to talk and sing, like "big folks." So it is delightful to old Christians to hear young converts pray and speak,

however imperfectly they may do it. Some little girl or boy attempting to pray vocally in class would make a much deeper impression than the leader could, though his words should be more correct and better arranged. Leaders do well, sometimes, to get through with their other exercises in season to allow a number of their members to pray before they part.

The writer remembers his own early experience on this subject with gratitude. He had not been to many class-meetings before his fatherly leader asked him to pray. The attempt was made with much trembling. Soon after he invited him to lead a part of the class, and a little later to lead the whole, as he was ill and unable to be present. It was a terrible trial, but exceedingly profitable.

Rev. Mr. Atkinson says most truthfully in his late work on class-meetings, "some of our most successful toilers" in the kingdom and patience of Jesus "would never have attained their glorious art but for the inspiration, the guidance, and the practice which the class-meeting afforded them. . . . It was in talking there that their lips received the kindling touch, and their tongues were trained to holy eloquence." Bishops Coke and Asbury

say that the class-meetings are, in a considerable degree, our universities for the ministry."—*Emory's History of the Discipline*, pp. 326, 327.

Leaders have sometimes indulged in sharp words toward defective members, but this is seldom advisable. If they need rebuke, it is better to see them alone. *Kind words* are more appropriate, and promise the best results. They have been known, too, to be so enamored with the more advanced and mature of their members as to overlook the young and weak ones. This is a mistake. The physician should give his first and best attention to those who are most in need of his services.

It is well for leaders, also, to take an interest in the studies of their members, recommending certain books and tracts best adapted to their growth in religion and usefulness. A few right books, well read, will do them much good ; they should early become established in the faith, and in their Church relations, by reading, or they will be likely, sooner or later, to be swept away from the Church. "Give attendance to reading," is an apostolic injunction too little regarded.

## CHAPTER VIII.

OF DUTIES DEVOLVING UPON OFFICIAL MEMBERS  
IN THEIR ASSOCIATE RELATIONS.

WE have thus far spoken chiefly of the primary and personal duties of church officers connected with their respective departments of service. They have other obligations which require them to act in consultation with their pastor and each other. It is hardly necessary even to mention all these. A few, however, are worthy of particular notice, and will be presented under appropriate heads, as follows :—

## I. OF GRANTING LICENSES.

With regard to licensing exhorters and local preachers, and recommending the latter for orders and admission to the traveling connection, they cannot be too particular. The question of “grace” is worthy of the highest consideration. If a candidate is of doubtful piety, his case had better be laid over, whatever his “gifts” or learning. A godless ministry is worse than none. Nor should officials be too exacting as to gifts and literary attainments

where grace abounds in an upright life and earnest zeal for the salvation of souls. Such grace will bring gifts, as the history of our ministry fully proves. Some Quarterly Conferences have erred in refusing young men a license to preach simply on the ground that they would not like to have them for their pastor. Had this policy generally prevailed, forty-nine fiftieths of our present ministry had never appeared in the pulpit. The question is not whether a candidate is now competent to be your pastor, but whether he is likely to be useful anywhere within his proposed range, and possesses those qualities which promise improvement. Some of our able and useful ministers, were refused license at home, and were obliged to remove their membership to another charge to obtain one.

Nor should you grant a license of any sort from mere personal friendship in the absence of respectable endowment for the work. A young man may be deceived with regard to his call and qualifications, in which case he should be advised privately and kindly to postpone his application, and employ his gifts as a private member, or at most as an exhorter. The writer appeared only as an exhorter until a few days before he was received into the Conference as a probationer, and was the gainer by it.

Public expectation was less than it would have been had he been dubbed reverend. And when presiding elder, he often advised young men, who applied for license to preach, to take an exhorter's license rather until they should become mature and efficient, and they saw the point and did so.

We make these suggestions for several reasons, namely: 1. That some officials are too fearful in granting licenses, and require qualifications that young men seldom possess. 2. That others are not sufficiently careful, and are disposed to license all who apply, without any satisfactory evidence of their call. Some are contented with zeal without knowledge or discretion, and others are too well satisfied with knowledge without zeal; and between them many good laymen have been spoiled to make poor ministers.

We will only add, where a mistake of this kind occurs it should be corrected at the earliest opportunity. So soon as it is found that any license is not used as was intended, that is, that an exhorter does *not* exhort, or a preacher does *not* preach, though in health to do so, the license should be revoked, and particularly when there is any reason to question the moral integrity of the party holding it. Much as the



Church needs preachers and exhorters, she can well afford to spare this class of incumbents. And, if the Quarterly Conferences would act on this principle, they might be a little freer in granting licenses, it being understood on all sides that they would be continued no longer than they should be found useful. It would also relieve the embarrassment connected with voting against renewing them, which often operates to perpetuate them without sufficient reason. This principle should also govern in recommending licenses as well as in granting them.

## II. OF OBTAINING PASTORS AND SUPPLIES.

Though our bishops have the appointment of the preachers to their respective charges, this does not relieve official laymen of all responsibility in the premises. They have the right of representation and petition, and being intimately acquainted with the circumstances and wishes of the people, it is expected that they will communicate in their associate capacity with the bishop through their presiding elder or otherwise. This is in harmony with the spirit of the Discipline. Some, however, go much further, and negotiate with the men they desire as pastors, subject, of course, to the presiding bishop's sanction, and there seems to be

little disposition among our leading ministers to object. Whether this is for or against us as a people we will not undertake to decide. The bishops need correct information, and they must have it or make their appointments at random. Any thing that officials can do to furnish it will, no doubt, be regarded with favor. But the bishops cannot and should not be forced into circumstances where they *must* appoint a particular minister to a particular charge against their settled convictions of propriety, or create a storm that may never be allayed. And this is just where they sometimes find themselves, owing to the unreasonable action of Official Boards, Quarterly Conferences, and self-constituted committees. To avoid this and correlative evils we suggest:—

1. That all officials ought to take special interest in maintaining an efficient ministry in their respective charges. The duty grows out of their relations. Not to care who is sent, is worse than to negotiate.

2. Whatever is desirable, let it be done *officially* in the Quarterly Conference, or in committee of the whole, and not by a few individuals, who take it upon themselves to represent the whole Church. Self-appointed committees are common where the Church is

managed by a clique of unreasonable partisans, but should be heard with great caution.

3. Let the business be done through the presiding elder, unless there are special reasons for adopting another course. He has charge in the absence of the bishop, and should not only know every thing that is done, but should be intrusted with carrying your wishes into effect, if not alone, in connection with a special committee. It is not respectful to overlook a regularly appointed officer in business for which he is largely responsible, nor is it good policy. He may have great influence with the bishop, though he has not with you.

4. Be careful in making your selections. Wise officials sometimes commit huge blunders. Being impressed with the first appearance of a man, they often petition for him without asking many questions. One grand old Church happened to hear a marvelous sermon from a stranger, and with united voice selected him for their next preacher and secured his appointment. But he never preached another such sermon or did any thing else answerable to it, showing the folly of selecting a minister on so slight information. He worried through one year and left to return no more. Officials ought to be very sure that they know their man before they petition.

Another Church heard a stranger at a camp-meeting, and marked him for their next pastor, without inquiring as to his usual preaching, pastoral habits, success, or any thing else, and only escaped by a friend suggesting that they would probably get him if they should send the petition they had prepared. They were also asked if they would dare to *elect* him, were it possible, on the information they then possessed. A moment's reflection revealed the folly of their proposed course, and the matter was forever dropped.

A similar Church went four hundred miles and enlisted a pretty pulpit orator without inquiring into his Methodism, grace, or usefulness, and believed their fortune was made ; but in a few months he left them and joined another denomination. They then went half the distance and secured a "star," who served them a little while and retired under reproach. This cured that board of making hasty petitions.

If you must choose your own preacher, as far as practicable you should exercise all the precaution you would were you going to elect him for three years. It will not do to trust to the opinions of any two or three of your acquaintances, however intelligent and pious. They may be your candidate's class-mates,

or their ideal of capability and adaptation may differ very widely from your own. You had better hear him at his home, and in the prayer-meeting, and inquire of his parishioners, as to his acceptability, how he carries himself, what are his excellences, weaknesses, faults, etc., and before acting, be sure to consult with your presiding elder. If you cannot afford to make a thorough investigation, you had better leave the matter entirely to the proper authorities. Then, if you are not satisfied, you can ask for a change at the close of the first year; whereas, if *you* make the arrangement, you will feel obliged to carry it through to the close of the regular term.

But if you *will* negotiate or petition, we would advise,

1. That you seek for a man of deep personal piety, one who walks and talks with God.
2. One who has good sound common sense, well balanced, not a hobbyist, practical and persevering.
3. One who *aims* to save souls and build up the Church in personal holiness. The *manifest aim* of a minister has more to do with his success than is generally imagined. More fail for the want of the right aim, than for the want of culture.
4. One who preaches Jesus and his love summer and winter, and has

no confidence in literary essays to draw a congregation or to convert sinners. 5. One who loves his people, and will make their acquaintance for their religious advantage, and knows how to shake hands heartily and kindly, and give his poorest hearers a friendly recognition wherever he may meet them. Such a man will fill your house, and leave your Church larger and better than he found it. 6. However wealthy, you should avoid offering exorbitant salaries. One society bidding for a minister against another has a bad look and a worse influence. It is extremely demoralizing to the connection. The Discipline provides for a "comfortable support," and that should be furnished. It will be a sad day for the Church when our officials shall lead us astray in this particular. We already begin to hear of high-priced and low-priced preachers, and of salaries offered and accepted. But fortunately, perhaps, some are now groaning under heavy burdens, which may check this wayward tendency.

There is one other point intimately connected with that of salaries to which officials should give especial attention, we refer to *vacations*. These are of modern origin. If a minister is sick and unable to do his work, officials should afford him relief, and continue his salary, if possible,

though it may be in the dead of winter. There may be other cases, as of exhaustion from excessive labor, when a similar course would be advisable. Our objection is to vacations irrespective of health, which are beginning to be customary, and extend from two to ten weeks during the heat of summer. That they are deleterious to the societies generally which grant them, we have not the least doubt. Where Churches are closed during the time, some children and adults who have no vacation leave and never return. The evil is less when the ordinary services are kept up, however imperfectly. And considering the way in which many of the favored pastors dispose of themselves, it is questionable whether they would not do better to stay about home, preach once on the Sabbath, and keep within call to console their dying or afflicted members and attend funerals. But if you grant a vacation you should make some provision for these emergencies and have it publicly announced, so that the congregation should know on whom to call for pastoral service if needed. Not to do so, during the most sickly season of the year, is virtually to say to the people that the service is unimportant, from which they naturally infer that the pastorate is a farce. Physicians never take

a vacation without engaging some one to look after their patients, nor do teachers and other secular men step aside for a day without leaving their business in competent hands.

We emphasize this point, because we have been compelled to see the mortifying position in which some of our pastors and Churches have placed themselves. Only last summer we were called upon to attend funerals by deeply afflicted Methodists who had traveled many miles and rung many parsonage door bells in vain to find a preacher. Being pre-engaged in church work, and unable to serve them, they finally found relief in another denomination. And, as if to add to the ridiculousness of the situation, a reporter called on the Catholic priest, an elderly, hard-working neighbour of ours just at that time, and inquired where he proposed to spend his vacation, and he laughed at him, saying that he never "took a vacation in his life."

With these suggestions, we commend the subject to your prayerful consideration. You have the whole matter in your own hands. Preachers will submit to your wisdom in the premises. What you do for one well man you will be expected to do for all. May God direct you to Christian conclusions !



## III. OF CHURCH MUSIC.

Though singing is a part of divine worship, and is therefore under the control of the pastor, custom invests officials with high responsibility in regard to it. (See Dis., ¶ 55.) The Methodist theory has been from the beginning decidedly in favor of congregational singing. "Exhort every person in the congregation," says the Discipline, "to sing, not one in ten only." But by some mismanagement this policy was superseded by the introduction of choirs and quartettes, divesting us of our musical power and distinction. The tide, however, seems to be turning in favor of our first love, for which we should be devoutly thankful. The tyranny of choirs is intolerable, to say nothing of much of their music, especially when they are irreligious, and are left to themselves. It is time for preachers and officials to be delivered out of their hands. If you employ experts to aid in this department of public worship, you should require them to obey orders and dismiss them for not doing so. Mr. Ira D. Sankey, the collaborer of Mr. Moody, the evangelist, gives some wholesome advice on the subject, growing out of fifteen years' experience in conducting the service of praise in many churches and

countries. He insists on having a good large choir of *Christian* singers, who will encourage the congregation to join with them, and not monopolize the service themselves. He says :—

I would not have unconverted persons leading the praise of the people of God. I am fully persuaded that four fifths of the traditionary trouble with choirs arises from having unconverted people conducting this part of the service of the sanctuary. If I could not get a converted choir, I would go back to the good old ways of our forefathers and select the best Christian man in the Church who has a good voice, and put him in front of the congregation, and let him lead as best he could. I am sure the people would join more heartily under his leading than they would with a choir who are anxious to show how well they can execute some new tune which they have just found. . . .

I would have the singers and the organ in front of the congregation, near the minister or speaker, and would insist on deportment by the singers in keeping with the services of the house of God. The conduct of the choir during the service will have very much to do with the success of the preaching. Instead of whispering, writing notes, passing books, and the like, the choir should give the closest attention to all the services, especially to the preaching of the word. There should be the most intimate understanding between the leader of the singing and the pastor. . . .

The congregation should be exhorted by the pastor to join heartily in the singing, and if a choir-master should persist in bringing out new-fangled tunes in which the

people cannot join, he should be set aside, and his place supplied by some one who would not be so ambitious to show off how well the choir could perform.

The whole question of the singing should be kept in the hands of the office-bearers of the Church, and the choir should never be encouraged to entertain the idea that they are an independent organization, with power to levy war upon the Church and bring it to terms, or to secede from it and cause a disruption.—*S. S. Times*, vol. xviii, No. 4.

It must never be forgotten that singing is *worship*. W. F. Sherwin lately gave utterance to some pertinent remarks in the Christian Convention at Philadelphia directly to this point. He said :—

I like to thrust the word of God down into people's hearts, as the bases of all operations, and I should like if all Churches, ministers, elders, choirs, priests, or what not, would constantly come to this word. Let me call your attention to two or three passages of Scripture which settles the whole matter. First, we read in Psalm l, 23, "Whoso offereth praise glorifieth me." Therefore he who does not glorify God in his song is not offering praise, though he may sing as never mortal sung before. Sometimes men try to glorify themselves, sometimes to glorify an organ builder. I know of a case that occurred recently where an organ concert was introduced to show the acoustic properties of a church and the musical qualities of an organ, and they called it a *Praise Service*.

In 1 Corinthians xiv, 11, is something which applies to this very matter of Church music: "Therefore, if I

know not the meaning of the voice, I shall be unto him that speaketh a barbarian, and he that speaketh shall be a barbarian unto me.' 'For if I pray in an unknown tongue (v. 14) my spirit prayeth, but my understanding is unfruitful.' What is it then? 'I will pray in the spirit and I will pray with the understanding also; I will *sing* with the spirit and I will sing with the understanding also.' Now, Paul knew just what he was about when he put the music of the sanctuary and the praying of the sanctuary on a level. What is prayer in the one, is prayer in the other. What is wrong and out of place in the one, is wrong and out of place in the other. It is as bad to say we will sing a verse or two to cover the confusion, or while something else is going on, as it would be for Brother Moody to lead in prayer while we take up a collection.

Let it never be forgotten that the music of the Church should be under the control of the Church, especially of the pastor as the chief officer of the Church. He is the responsible conductor of all its exercises. . . . When a leader assumes to control the singing as did one in New York, who said to his pastor, "You take care of your end of the church and I will take care of my end," that man should not be suffered any longer to pollute so much as a parlor organ.—*S. S. Times*, Jan. 29, 1876.

The music of the church involves the question of *organs* also, about which there is a general misapprehension. Under the delusion that a large and expensive organ is desirable, many poor societies have involved themselves in ruinous debts to obtain one. The result is,

they are at extra expense for a blower and an accomplished player, and then the sentiment is drowned by the sound, so that the worshiper cannot tell what is piped or harped, and it makes little difference what hymn is used. Thus this most inspiring part of worship becomes "vain jangling;" and the voluntaries of an unchristian organist are often shocking, particularly the storm of inappropriate sounds let off at the close of the service.

We have long been of the opinion that a small organ is preferable, but have hardly dared to avow it. But since we heard Mr. Sankey lead a choir of a thousand singers in the presence of ten thousand people with only a little cabinet organ to aid him, we have been emboldened to speak out. In the address before mentioned he said in so many words that "he *preferred* a small cabinet organ to a large pipe organ, which drowns the people's voices." He is also opposed to *long* interludes and long voluntaries, and insists on a clear expression of the words sung, that the people may have the benefit of the sentiment as well as the sound.

But if you will have a pipe organ, get a *small* one. Professor Tourjée, of the Boston Conservatory, describes four different instruments, the largest costing \$5,000, and large enough for any

church ; the second of nearly the same size, but less complicated, costing \$2,500 ; the third, a little smaller, costing from \$800 to \$1,200 ; and the last costing \$500, and large enough and good enough for most congregations, and sufficiently elaborate to tax the skill of ordinary players. (See *Golden Rule*, Jan. 26, 1876.)

If none of these are satisfactory you may purchase a good cabinet organ if you know how, ranging from \$75 to \$300, and play it well for one third of what it would cost you to maintain a larger organ poorly. But whatever you get, *pay* for it, and then insist on having it played to aid the singing, and not to spoil it. And do not be in so much haste, or confide so much in one man's opinion, as to make a mistake.

#### IV. BENEVOLENT COLLECTIONS.

Officials are usually and properly consulted by their pastor in regard to our benevolences. Whatever may be his rights in the premises, he naturally desires to act in harmony with his leading men. Much, therefore, depends on you. While we are hardly prepared to prescribe a definite system of benevolent financiering, we will venture to offer a few suggestions :—

1. That you do not dodge the subject, but look it fairly in the face. By this we mean,

that you deliberately consider all claims duly presented, and not bluff them off with a groan about "so many collections." One will ask you to help in sending the Gospel to the heathen, another to aid in the purchase of books and tracts for the poor, and so on. But whatever may be the object proposed hear and consider it. If it is worthy, help it what you can consistently with your necessary expenses and other obligations. If you are poor and can do but little, do that little cheerfully and religiously. That is a beautiful report which shows that every disciplinary claim has been considered, and responded to in *money*, though it may be but to a very limited extent. Our scarcity is more owing to *no* collections than to *small* ones.

2. That you submit each object on its own merit, and give the people a fair chance to contribute as they may be able and feel disposed. The common method of combining several objects in one collection, called the "*omnibus*" plan, is a mistake. It lessens the number of the collections, indeed, but it lessens the aggregate amount of them more, and is a shrewd method of dismissing an unpleasant subject.

Now, if our plan of meeting current expenses should be adopted it will reduce the number of special collections very much, and leave

room for each of our benevolences without crowding them or the people. All that need be done in most cases is to present the cause on its merits, and ask all to give something, however little. The missionary collection, and perhaps one other, will need more urging.

Officials, and preachers also, are often too timid at this point. They should meet the question heroically, and go manfully through the ceremony of representing each cause by itself and taking a collection for it, though it may not amount to a dollar. The representation will commend the subject to favorable consideration, and a part of the hearers will some day have more to give. It would hardly be possible to collect less than a penny a piece for each member of the whole Church on this plan, and yet this would be more than our annual average for the Tract cause during the last five years.

3. But perhaps you will say we cannot afford it. Cannot afford what? To give a penny? That is not so. You have hardly a pensioner on your Church that cannot afford to do that for each of our benevolences, while most of your members could well spare many times that amount.

To settle this question, just take your pencil and sit down and figure up all you gave last



year for benevolence, and see how very little it is as compared with your income, or what you spent on yourself that might better have been given to Christ. Now, add to that what you paid for preaching, that is, for the support of local religion, which was as necessary to you and the training of your family, to say the least, as were the public schools or the civil government. If the sum total startles you by its vastness, we will say no more. But most of you will probably find it smaller than you anticipated, and that you can well afford to let the collections take their disciplinary course without demur.

4. There is another view to be taken of the subject. Churches which live solely for themselves, and care little for others, uniformly decline, while those which take a benevolent interest in others prosper. The Bible contains no truer statement than that "There is that scattereth, and yet increaseth ; and there is that withholdeth more than is meet, but it tendeth to poverty." Prov. xi, 24.

We say this with due appreciation of your difficulties. Some of you have heavy burdens to bear, and may not see your way through. But a magnanimous course will pay, and bring deliverance.

## V. OF THE PIETY AND REPUTATION OF THE CHURCH.

In becoming members of the Church we renounced the devil and all his works, the vain pomp and glory of the world, with all covetous desires of the same, and promised that we would not follow or be led by them. (*Dis.*, p. 482.) We agreed, also, to abstain from "such diversions as cannot be used in the name of the Lord Jesus." (*Dis.*, p. 32.) These are dangerous points with many of our young people. The utmost care has often failed to restrain some of them from being overcome. It is expected of you that you will rigidly abide by these rules, and exert all your influence to have others do the same.

But some take a different course. It was only yesterday that a recent case came to our knowledge in which a trustee, a member of the Church, by persistent effort got up a dance at a family gathering at the house of another member, and drew into it some five or six others, who, like himself, had publicly discarded such diversions. We are happy to say, however, that not a few were unconquerable, and some justly left the party in disgust. The sooner that man and all like him reform, or renounce

religion, the better it will be for the Church. Dancing is no part of Methodism, though it may be opened with prayer, and should not be encouraged. It belongs to the world, and, as often practiced, to the flesh, if not to the devil, though a less evil of itself than some other amusements with which it is generally associated.

There is a large class of different amusements which will tempt you more than dancing, professing as they do to aid in paying expenses, but they are disgraceful to the Church and ruinous to spiritual religion. We have before us a flaming show bill representing one species of this numerous family. It is 24 by 39 inches in size, from which we extract the following:—

THE SECOND GRAND  
ENTERTAINMENT

BY THE

*Young Ladies and Gentlemen of ..... M. E. Church,*

CONSISTING OF

DRAMAS, TABLEAUX, PANTOMIME, AND MUSIC.

*Proceeds FOR THE BENEFIT of the Church.*

A smaller sheet goes more into particulars, and reveals the fact that Peter and Lady Teazle, Yankee Doodle, Mistletoe, and a Farce entitled "Kiss in the Dark," were to be displayed.

A gentleman who was present, and forwarded the aforesaid sheet to a friend, says in a letter: "Notwithstanding the inclemency of the weather the entertainment was well attended, and was opened by prayer by the pastor." Yet, after all, this theatrical display yielded the Church less than *forty-five* dollars.

But we will not enlarge upon this subject. Officials are expected to protect the Church against all such disgraceful expedients. Money is not valuable enough to be purchased at such a price, and the less members we gather by converting the church into a theater the better we shall be off.

*Finally*, In all your deliberations seek earnestly to *agree*. You are intrusted with high and holy responsibilities. As *you* go, so goes the Church. Avoid contention of every kind. Be patient under defeat. Remember that, however settled your convictions on any subject, you may be in error, and your opponents right. Take offense at nothing. Let it be understood that you stand by the cause at whatever cost of feeling. If wronged, bear it patiently. Never try to rule by your money or influence to the grief of your brethren. Conquer by forbearance. Use no hard words. Be prompt and active in the religious meetings. These are

left too much to the younger and less influential members. Be ready to speak or pray as occasion may require, and that from the heart. Do not cater to the world. Never be ambitious of office, nor decline it when offered you. Be tender to the poor, and merit the love of all who know you. Rule in love, but in righteousness. "Stand up for Jesus" in all your doings. And may God send you prosperity!

## CHAPTER IX.

## OF MISCELLANEOUS OFFICERS.

POWERS AND DUTIES OF SUPERINTENDENT, CHOIRISTERS, ORGANISTS, CHAIRMEN OF COMMITTEES, PRESIDENTS, AND PARLIAMENTARY USAGES.

**I**N addition to the officers already mentioned, there are others more or less intimately connected with our Church who are entitled to consideration.

## SUNDAY-SCHOOL SUPERINTENDENTS

hold one of the most important offices known to any people, giving them the special charge of the religious training of children and youth. They, therefore, have the destiny of the Church in their power. The position of minister of the Gospel is not more responsible. They are a savor of life or of death to the young minds under their supervision, and, through them, to coming Methodism. Hence, too much care cannot be exercised in selecting men for this office.

The Sunday-school is an institution of the Church, and not an independent affair as some have imagined. The duties of pastors in relation to it are specified with marked precision.

(See *Dis.*, ¶ 251-254.) It is also required of Quarterly Conferences "To have supervision of all the Sunday-schools and Sunday-school Societies within the bounds of their circuit or station, and to inquire into the condition of each ; to approve of Sunday-school superintendents not elected by the Quarterly Conference, and to remove any superintendents who may prove unworthy or inefficient." *Dis.*, ¶ 96. The superintendent is, therefore, an officer of the Church and under its control. And if he is a member of the Church, he is also a member of the Quarterly Conference. (*Dis.*, ¶ 93.)

We state these facts to counteract the mischievous notion that Sunday-schools are not under the control of the Church, and may be conducted independently of Church authority. Also to show that if the Sunday-school is mismanaged the Quarterly Conference is to blame.

We have lately been consulted with regard to a school which was chiefly controlled by irreligious people, and amounted to little more than a Social Club. Few of the children attended public worship, and while the pastor was preaching the leading managers would be engaged in social chat in an anteroom, under pretense of planning for the school. Our advice was that the officials should go into the school and

either reform or abolish it. In another case the pastor had made arrangements with his board for a protracted meeting, and opened with his extra help on Sunday morning. The services of the day promised exceedingly well; but during the evening preaching the teachers convened and arranged for a *festival*, which would require the use of the church, and the peaceable pastor was obliged to suspend his revival work and await the convenience of the teachers. The school controlled the Church in that instance rather than the Church the school, which was not an isolated case.

In view of these and other similar facts, showing the need of radical reform at this point, we suggest :—

1. That superintendents should exercise their office in strict subordination to Church order. That they should attend upon the public services themselves, and, as far as possible, induce their teachers, officers, and scholars to do the same. By this means they will show that their schools are not competitors of the Church, but co-operators and helpers.

2. That they lay no plans that will interfere with the services. It is due to pastors that they be consulted in all matters of this kind, and fully understand what is proposed, and be a



party to every measure, especially as they have charge of the schools as well as of the Church.

These suggestions are not needed, we are quite sure, in many places. The officers of the Church largely supervise and control the schools, as they do the class and prayer meeting. Such schools work in harmony with the Church, and contribute largely to its strength and progress. The scholars attend the preaching with their parents or teachers and feel interested. But some of our congregations are almost destitute of children and youth. We had occasion to predict to one lately, that if they did not change their policy they would have no successors. "Where are the children?" we inquired. "O," answered the pastor, "they go to the Sunday-school." If the pastor does not preach to interest the children, let him be advised, and, if necessary, required to do it. One very learned brother, who thought he *could* not preach to the children, was almost forced to try, and making the effort found, to his surprise, that he pleased the congregation better than before. It lifted him right up. He had been preaching learned sermons to a *few* of his more intelligent hearers, a mistake of many, and had failed to interest the masses. Now, coming down to the comprehension of the children on practical and

experimental subjects, he pleased and profited all classes.

3. Superintendents should be religious, men of vital piety, who have been born of the Spirit, and who regard a similar change in others as indispensable to salvation. Though subordinate to the pastor, they wield a tremendous influence. They may conduct their schools in a manner to render them worse than useless—hot-beds of heresy and frivolity, or of solid spiritual piety.

Besides, the Discipline gives superintendents an important agency in the selection of books. (See *Discipline*, ¶ 250.) This is a power which has been carelessly exercised in a manner to crowd our libraries with the merest trash, with books which are calculated to amuse rather than impress the readers with the duties of life and the realities of eternity. Irreligious superintendents cannot feel the importance of this department of their work, nor are they competent to make a wise selection.

The grand object of Sunday-schools is to bring the children to Christ and train them for usefulness and heaven. How can a superintendent do this unless he be in Christ himself? He will never see that he had better have fifty scholars in one class under the training of a devout, earnest Christian, than to divide them

among half a dozen respectable sinners, who know nothing about religion experimentally. Nor will he see the impropriety of allowing his school to indulge in sinful amusements which the people he represents cannot consistently tolerate.

Our Church ought to learn some useful lessons from Romanists. They will not trust their children to the care of teachers who are not sound in their faith. Nor will they allow books to be read that have not been fully *examined* and approved by their priesthood. Hence their war upon the Bible in the public schools. They appreciate the importance of training the children, especially the girls, in their interests. Were Protestants to become as careful in this matter, there would be a radical revolution in the management of our Sunday-schools.

4. Superintendents should be men of sound judgment and self-control, and possess a fair degree of power to please, and tact to teach and govern. But few men have all these qualities naturally, and none possess them to such a degree as to preclude the necessity of cultivation. The means of instruction and improvement are now so abundant that any man of good natural and educational powers, with a loving heart and proper Christian ambition, may

lift himself to a high degree of efficiency. But to do this he will need to read, and think, and study the best plans and models, and keep his eye on the proper object, namely, training the children for God and usefulness.

Sunday-schools were originally designed to teach reading, spelling, etc., to poor children who had no other means of instruction, and were conducted by *paid* teachers. Methodism had the honor of introducing *unpaid* teachers to teach morals as well, and has succeeded most where it has made religion most prominent. Superintendents who keep their eye on this point, and manage every thing with reference to spiritual results, and tolerate no practices inconsistent therewith, generally bring their pupils to God and the Church during their minority. But where superintendents seek to please the children by leading them into worldly amusements the result is very different. They may prepare them for other Churches, which eschew vital piety and tolerate frivolity, but they spoil them for us, unless the pastor or others shall be able to reform and convert them in spite of their unfortunate training.

We might make other suggestions on this subject, but our main design has been compassed, namely, to emphasize the importance of

having our schools managed in harmony with the administration of the Church, and in a way to contribute to the highest spiritual results. The late action of the General Conference promises improvement in the objectionable matters above named. (*Discipline*, ¶ 248.)

#### OF CHORISTERS AND ORGANISTS.

These officers occupy a very important position, which some of them fill with admirable effect. We have often felt deeply impressed with our indebtedness to them for their inspiring services. Where they are in full sympathy with the pulpit, and have good taste and sound judgment, they may add wonderfully to the pleasure and profit of public worship. They are to the preacher what Sankey is to Moody. They help him in his best efforts, and where he fails they excel.

But some who occupy these positions are sadly wanting. In the first place they are irreligious, and have no interest in the worship of God, or its effect upon the people. They hold the office for what they can make out of it, and perform to glorify themselves, the music, or the organ, and when done, slip away until the close of the sermon; or, what is worse, remain and conduct in a manner to disgrace the house of

God and dampen its devotions. Our advice in regard to such officers is to dismiss them immediately, and sing the long metre doxology three times at each service if you can do no better. Choristers must be in sympathy with the occasion, or they can neither select appropriate music or sing it with proper effect. They need to *feel* the sentiment of the hymn in their souls in order to give it a right expression. And the same is largely true of the organist. If his heart is not interested, his preludes, interludes, and other voluntaries will show it often to the disgust of all sincere worshipers.

OF CHAIRMEN OF COMMITTEES, PRESIDENTS,  
ETC.

In the prosecution of Church work, gentlemen, and ladies too, are sometimes called upon to preside over committees, or larger assemblies. And it frequently happens that they are greatly embarrassed for the want of information as to parliamentary order, otherwise, the order of procedure which is generally observed in deliberative bodies. This places them in an awkward position. Unless they have read some good work on the subject, or witnessed the proceedings of similar bodies, they can neither know their own rights and duties, or the rights

and privileges of other members of the meeting. The natural result is, the business gets badly tangled and retarded, if not entirely defeated. We deem it important, therefore, to furnish a few of the more common rules which have become established by general usage.

This is desirable for another reason. Gentlemen especially will sometimes be called upon to participate in town meetings, conventions, or other associations, in which "knowledge is power," especially the knowledge of parliamentary usage. These rules will initiate them in the study and practice of conventional business, and, perhaps, prompt them to seek for high attainments. The following will suffice for all ordinary purposes :—

#### I. OF COMMITTEES.

Committees appointed to consider a particular subject are called *select committees*, while those which are appointed to consider all matters relating to a general subject are called *standing committees*.

In making up a committee it is usual to appoint a majority who are in favor of the measure proposed.

Where the chairman is not designated by the appointing body, the first named on the com-

mittee is expected to call the first meeting, and preside until a regular chairman shall be elected.

It may not convene while the appointing body is in session without special permission, and can act only when regularly assembled. They may report by the chairman, or any other person they may select, and should return all papers put into their hands unmutilated.

Their report should be in writing, and signed by the chairman and secretary.

They may state their findings and conclusions in the form of resolutions or otherwise, and give their reasons or not, as they please. The acceptance of the report of a *select committee* ends their authority.

Should a minority of the committee disapprove of the report adopted by the majority, they may make a *minority report* representing their own views. This should be introduced to the appointing body, immediately after the reading of the report of the majority, as a *substitute*. It being read, it is then in order to move to take up either for consideration and adoption. Whichever may get precedence, the other may be immediately offered on motion as an amendment, or substitute.

*A committee of the whole* is composed of the



whole senate, house, or other body, by resolving itself into one. It is generally done to avoid certain parliamentary restrictions, and give a freer and wider range to discussion.

## 2. OF ORGANIZATION.

Where assemblies of people are convened, and desire to assume conventional order, it is usual for a person of age and distinction to rise and nominate some one to act as chairman *pro tempore*, that is, for the time being, when he puts his own motion and pronounces the result of the vote ; or he may call for the nomination of a chairman from the body.

If several are nominated he should put the motion in the order in which they were named until one of them receives a majority of the votes, when the person thus elected takes the chair.

The next thing in order is to appoint a secretary *pro tempore*. If several are appointed the first elected is the principal.

At this stage in the proceedings it is usual to determine who are members of the assembly and have a right to vote. This will involve the reading of the call, if one has been made, and the reception of credentials, or otherwise, as the case may be. Then comes

## THE PERMANENT ORGANIZATION,

which is sometimes effected by raising a committee to nominate a full board of officers, to be elected by ballot or otherwise ; and sometimes by nominating them *viva voce*, and confirming by ballot or hand vote.

## 3. OF PRESIDING OFFICERS.

The duties of presiding officers, unless directed by some special order, are generally as follows :—

To call the members to order at the appointed time.

To conduct the religious services in person, or by proxy.

To have the secretary call the roll at each session, unless otherwise ordered.

To have the records of the previous meeting read, corrected, and approved, if not done at the close of said meeting.

To announce the order of business, if any has been established. If not, to ask and carry out the pleasure of the meeting.

To receive all communications to the body and announce them.

To put to vote all questions regularly submitted, and declare the result.

To hold the members to order in the prosecution of the business.

To decide all questions of law.

To authenticate by his signature all the acts and proceedings of the assembly.

To appoint committees, when directed, and when a standing rule of the body requires him to do so.

To give attention to each individual while speaking, and show no partiality to personal or party friends, protecting the rights and privileges of minorities and opponents as well as those of others. Chairmen sometimes deal very unfairly, but they gain nothing by it in the end.

When the president withdraws from the chair the first vice-president should take his place. If there be no vice-president, custom allows the president to appoint a chairman during his temporary absence.

If the president be absent, and it becomes necessary to elect one *pro tem.*, the secretary must conduct the proceedings.

In large assemblies the presiding officer may read sitting, but should *rise* to state a motion or put a question.

## 4. OF THE DUTIES OF THE SECRETARY.

The secretary is generally required to keep a correct record of the proceedings, and authenticate them by his signature.

To read, standing, all papers which may be ordered.

To notify the chairman of each committee of his appointment, giving him a list of his colleagues, and stating the business referred to the Committee.

To allow no papers to be taken from his table without permission from the assembly.

He should write plainly, giving each item of business a paragraph by itself, noted in the margin for easy reference.

If a member of the body, he may participate in its deliberations, the same as though he was not secretary.

## 5. OF MEMBERS.

All members have an equal right to make motions, explain, and advocate them in discussion.

No member should be interrupted when speaking, except by the president, who may call him to order when he departs from the question, uses personalities or disrespectful lan-

guage ; but any member may call the attention of the president to the subject when he deems a speaker out of order, and may *explain* when he thinks *himself* misrepresented.

The president may declare a member out of order when he thinks him indecorous, or otherwise guilty of improper conduct ; but the accused member may be heard in his own defense, when he should withdraw until the question is settled.

The only punishments which a deliberative body can inflict are reproof, prohibition to speak or vote for a specified time, and expulsion.

Any member who desires to speak must rise and respectfully address the Chair.

If two or more members thus indicate their desire, the president should give the floor to the one whose voice he first heard. If this is not satisfactory, the case may be decided by the assembly.

## 6. OF MOTIONS.

No speech should be made without a motion, nor after a motion is made and seconded, until it is stated by the president.

All motions or resolutions must be reduced to writing if the president, secretary, or any two members request it.

Motions may be withdrawn by the mover at any time before they are decided or amended.

No new motion or resolution can be made until the one under consideration is disposed of.

Motions not withdrawn must be adopted or rejected, unless one of the following motions should intervene, which motions must be put in the order in which they stand :—

1. To adjourn.
2. To indefinitely postpone.
3. To lay on the table.
4. To refer to a committee.
5. To postpone to a given time.
6. To amend or substitute it by another.

ADJOURNMENT. A simple motion to adjourn is always in order by any member who has the floor, and must be decided without amendment or debate. And when a motion to adjourn is lost it cannot be renewed until some other motion has been made, or other business transacted. (*Matthias's Manual*, p. 72.)

A motion to adjourn to a given time may be amended and debated. An adjournment without day is equivalent to a dissolution.

When a question is interrupted by a vote to adjourn it loses its precedence, and must be brought up again in the usual way, except in a special meeting, when it will be the first busi-

ness in order at the next session, the same as when an adjournment occurs by lapse of time, and not by vote.

INDEFINITE POSTPONEMENT. A vote to indefinitely postpone a subject or resolution places it beyond the reach of that session—it cannot be called up again.

LAYING ON THE TABLE. A vote to lay a motion or resolution on the table carries all amendments and collateral motions with it ; but the subject may be taken up again at the option of the body.

REFERRING TO A COMMITTEE. Matters are referred to a committee to obtain information or effect some modification. If there are two motions, one to refer to a *standing* committee, and the other to a *select* committee, that referring it to the standing committee should be first put. The whole subject may be referred, or only a part, with instructions, or without. A report may be *recommitted* when amendments are desired.

THE DIVISION OF A QUESTION. When a proposition is susceptible of division, it may be submitted to the vote in parts by common consent, or by order of the assembly.

FILLING OF BLANKS. When a paper is adopted, leaving blanks to be filled, and differ-

ent propositions are made, the motion should be first put on the *largest* sum and *longest time*.

### 7. OF AMENDMENTS.

An amendment may be accepted by the mover of an original proposition before it is stated by the chairman. If not so accepted, it must be put as a regular amendment.

Amendments may be made by striking out or inserting certain words, or by striking out some and inserting others.

When a proposition embraces several sentences or resolutions they should be taken up separately; but when they have all been passed upon, it is not usual to go back and propose other amendments.

An amendment may be amended, but not an amendment to an amendment of an amendment. In putting the question the chairman should begin with the last amendment, and work back to the original proposition.

Whatever is agreed to or discarded cannot be amended; nor is it in order to move again just what has been rejected.

In putting the vote, the main proposition should be read, then the words proposed to be struck out or inserted, and, finally, the whole as it will stand if the amendment be adopted.



Amendments may be made to modify a proposition or to defeat it. Resolutions are often amended by striking out all the words after "Resolved that," and inserting a proposition of an entirely different character.

ORDERS OF THE DAY are subjects that have been assigned to a certain day, or to a particular hour of a certain day. When the time arrives it is proper to move to take up the order of the day. If that motion fails, as it often does, a new motion to make the question involved the order for another day will be necessary.

#### 8. OF SUNDRY OTHER QUESTIONS.

PRIVILEGED QUESTIONS are of three kinds, namely: 1. Motions to adjourn; 2. Motions relating to the rights and privileges of the assembly, or of its members individually; 3. Motions for the order of the day.

All these questions take precedence of the business in hand. A vote to take up the order, or the orders of the day, if there be more than one, leaves the pending question just where it would stand under a motion to adjourn.

INCIDENTAL QUESTIONS, such as questions of order, motions for the reading of papers, leave to withdraw a motion, supervision of a rule, and

the amendment of an amendment, must be decided before the question which gave rise to them.

QUESTIONS OF ORDER are to be decided by the presiding officer without debate. If his decision is not satisfactory, any member may appeal to the assembly, when it becomes the duty of the Chair to submit the question, thus : " Shall the decision of the Chair stand as the decision of the assembly ? " It is then debatable, and the chairman may participate in the discussion. The vote is finally taken, and the decision announced, which settles the question.

THE PREVIOUS QUESTION is designed to suppress debate, and compel immediate action on the main question. It is put in this form : " Shall the main question be now put ? " It cannot be amended. If decided in the affirmative, the question must be put, first on the amendments, and then on the main proposition. It is not in order to move the previous question unless the assembly has made a rule providing for it. And when once made and seconded, all other motions and discussions must cease until it is settled.

It is deemed unparliamentary and abusive to introduce a proposition and at the same time move the previous question. It is emphatically so where the proposition has been supported

by a speech. Yet it is sometimes done. Judge Cushing advises that no notice be taken of the motion under these circumstances.

#### 9. OF THE ORDER OF BUSINESS.

When no order is prescribed, the chairman may present any regular business he may deem appropriate.

In acting on reports or other documents, embracing several propositions, they should be first read through by the secretary. Then they should be read by the president or secretary, pausing at the close of each paragraph, that amendments may be made if desired, acting on the preamble last. Having thus passed through any paper, it is proper to adopt it as a whole.

#### 10. OF ORDER IN DEBATE.

The presiding officer is presumed not to enter into the debate ; but he is allowed to state matters of fact within his knowledge, to inform the assembly on points of order when called upon to do so, or when it is necessary.

A member arising to address the assembly should address the president. The person whose voice is first heard is entitled to the floor.

One member giving way to another to speak really resigns the floor, and can retain it only by common consent, or the vote of the assembly.

When the presiding officer rises to speak other members should be seated, but he has no right to interrupt a speaker unless he is out of order. Then, if the speaker abandons his objectionable course he may proceed, unless restrained by the assembly.

No member should speak more than once on the same question without permission of the assembly, except to explain when misrepresented.

Respectful attention should be paid to every speaker. If any one uses offensive language he may be interrupted by any member, or by the president, and the words objected to should be written by the secretary, that he may disclaim them, apologize for them, or receive the censure of the assembly.

## II. OF TAKING THE QUESTION.

A proposition made to a deliberative body is called a *motion*; when propounded to the assembly for action it is called a *question*; when adopted it becomes an *order*, *resolution*, or *vote* of the assembly.

Strictly speaking, no vote can be taken without a motion being first made and seconded; but for the sake of dispatch the presiding officer sometimes puts the question without waiting for this formality.

The question being stated, the president first puts the affirmative thus: "All in favor of the motion to adopt say I," or "raise your hands." Then, "All opposed will say No," or "raise your hands," either way the president may prefer or the assembly may have ordered. He will announce the result as he understands it.

Should he or others be in doubt, a count or a yea and nay vote may be ordered.

All members present are required to vote on every question unless excused. Absentees cannot vote afterward without permission from the assembly.

If the members are equally divided on any question, the presiding officer is generally allowed to give the casting vote. This rule, however, does not apply in Annual or Quarterly Conferences.

If a *quorum* is not present on a count vote there can be no decision.

A motion to reconsider can only be made by a member who voted in the *majority*.

Such a motion adopted places the question just where it was before it was decided, and leaves it open for discussion, amendment, adoption, or rejection. These rules have been compiled chiefly from *Cushing's Manual*, and Baker on the Discipline.

## CHAPTER X.

## OF TEMPERANCE FORMULAS—WITH INSTRUCTIONS RELATING TO MAKING WILLS.

TEMPERANCE has occupied a prominent place in the legislation of our Church from the beginning. As early as 1780 the Conference forbade the distillation of grain into spirituous liquors. Three years after it prohibited the *sale* and *use* of such liquors as a beverage, and has never receded from the prohibitory position then assumed. When the present reform commenced about the year 1828, our Church was ready for action and took a bold stand. She is still in the conflict, aiding in forming temperance societies, circulating the pledge, etc., and will never cease her efforts, it is to be hoped, until the sale and use of intoxicating liquors shall come to a perpetual end. To aid our young men in this noble work we present the following

*Form or Constitution for Local or Church Temperance Societies.*

## ARTICLE I.—NAME.

This association shall be called the —— Temperance Society.

ARTICLE II.—OBJECT.

Its object shall be to promote the cause of total abstinence from the manufacture, sale, and use of intoxicating drinks ; to take measures to present the pledge to every man, woman, and child over ten years of age for signature ; circulate a temperance literature ; and all other measures calculated to remove the evils of intemperance from our land.

ARTICLE III.—PLEDGE.

The pledge of the society shall be as follows :—

“ We, the undersigned, do agree that we will not use intoxicating liquors as a beverage, nor traffic in them ; that we will not provide them as an article of entertainment, or for persons in our employment ; and that in all suitable ways we will discountenance their use throughout the community.”

ARTICLE IV.—OFFICERS.

The officers of this association shall be a president, two vice-presidents, secretary, a treasurer, and an executive committee of five, who shall be elected annually, and their duties shall be the same as those performed by these officers in similar associations.

ARTICLE V.—MEETINGS.

Public meetings shall be held monthly ; and the annual meetings at such time and place as shall be fixed by the executive committee.

The pledge may be copied and circulated for individual signatures. If it is stronger than some are willing to take, the following may be

used, which is also published by the National Temperance Society on a beautiful card, to wit :

“ I hereby solemnly promise to *abstain* from the use of all intoxicating liquors as a beverage.”

The subject is worthy of our most prayerful attention. Intemperance is the worst of evils—the roaring lion, which devours more than war or pestilence. Still it may be subdued. Let no one be discouraged. There have been great improvements in forty years. Every little effort in the right direction helps. The masses will come to their senses some day and prohibit the manufacture and sale of alcoholic drinks, as they do theft and murder now. In the meantime we can save some from utter ruin.

#### OF WILLS.

1. If you are a man of means make your will, disposing of your property as you would like to have it distributed if you were going to die to-morrow. Write it yourself, if you please, but see that you have it properly executed according to the laws of *your own State*. It will save your heirs much trouble and expense, and, perhaps, many unpleasant heart-burnings. If you die without a will, your property will be divided among your heirs according to law. Not one dollar of it can be appropriated to benevolence,



whatever may have been your purposes or desires in the premises. You should do it at once, as you are liable to die suddenly, and as, in many of the States, a will is not valid, so far as benevolent institutions are concerned, unless executed a *full year* previous to the death of the testator. *Forty thousand* dollars have lately been lost to Christianity because a will was not made a few weeks sooner. You can alter your will at any future time by codicil, or annul it by executing a new one, or without doing so, at your own pleasure. Some people have made a dozen wills or more within the last forty years, as their circumstances and wishes have changed. The death or enrichment of a legatee, or the birth or misfortune of a child, will naturally require some modification, or a complete reconstruction.

2. *Advise* your friends to do the same, inviting their attention to the various benevolent enterprises of the Church, especially if they have no dependent relatives whom they care to endow. Methodism has gathered persons of all nations and tribes, and taught them to be industrious, enterprising, and economical. Many of her poor, lone children have become wealthy, and know no relatives so dear to them as the cause of God, to which they are indebted for all they have and are. By speaking a kind

word to them, you may secure legacies that will greatly help that cause when they are forever gone.

3. But in making a will great care should be taken to give the *proper name* of the legatee, whether a person or association, as well as in the execution of the instrument. Many wills have been utterly defeated by mistakes at these points. The corporate names of our leading benevolent institutions are as follow :—

The Missionary Society of the Methodist Episcopal Church, incorporated by the Legislature of the State of New York.

The Sunday-School Union of the Methodist Episcopal Church, incorporated by the Legislature of the State of New York.

The Tract Society of the Methodist Episcopal Church, incorporated by the Legislature of the State of New York.

The Board of Church Extension of the Methodist Episcopal Church, incorporated by the Legislature of the State of Pennsylvania.

The Freedmen's Aid Society of the Methodist Episcopal Church, incorporated by the Legislature of the State of Ohio.

The Board of Education of the Methodist Episcopal Church, incorporated by the Legislature of the State of New York.

The Board of Trustees of the Methodist Episcopal Church, incorporated by the Legislature of the State of Ohio.

There are also many local societies and corporations connected with the several Annual Conferences which are entitled to consideration. It is highly important to ascertain whether they are authorized to receive legacies, as some are not. Our Church lost large sums of money on this ground before it and its institutions became properly incorporated.

4. The following facts may be useful to you in this connection :—

1. All wills must be made in writing, and be signed by the testator's full name at the end.

2. They should be attested by *three* witnesses, though some of the States only require *two*, and one, none. The witnesses should always write their places of residence against their names.

3. Marriage, and the birth of a child after the execution of a will, revoke it, unless the wife and child are provided for in some way.

The will of a single woman is canceled by her marriage, except when she makes an arrangement before marriage to retain her right to make a will after marriage. This should not be forgotten in contemplating marriage.

5. The sale of, or an agreement to sell, property devised in a will revokes such will.

6. If any provision made in a will for the wife of the testator is intended to exclude her right of *dower* it should be so stated, otherwise she may claim *dower* also.

7. A devise to a subscribing witness is void, though it does not invalidate the will in other respects.

8. Bequests to aliens, or corporations not authorized by law to receive or hold property, are void.

9. For the convenience of the reader we present the following form, which should be modified to accommodate any special law of the State where the devisee may reside :—

GENERAL FORM OF DISPOSING OF BOTH REAL  
AND PERSONAL ESTATE.

In the name of God, Amen. I, A. B., of ———, being of good bodily health, and of sound mind and memory, knowing the uncertainty of human life, and being desirous of directing how my worldly affairs should be adjusted after my decease, do make and publish this my last will and testament, hereby revoking and making null and void all other wills and testaments by me heretofore made. And

first I commend my soul to Him who gave it, and my body to the earth, to be buried with moderate expense, and without display, (or otherwise.)

And as to my worldly estate and all the property, real, personal, or mixed, of which I shall die seized or possessed, or to which I shall be entitled at the time of my decease, I devise and bequeath and dispose of in the manner following, to wit :—

*First.* My will is, that all my just debts and funeral charges shall, by my executors hereinafter named, be paid out of my estate as soon after my decease as shall be found by them convenient.

*Second.* I give, devise, and bequeath to my beloved wife, C. D., all my household furniture, library, houses, (or whatever else,) and also five thousand dollars in money, to be paid to her by my executors within —— months after my decease ; to have and to hold the same to her, and her executors, administrators, and assigns forever, (or otherwise,) all of which is in place of dower.

*Third.* I give and bequeath to my honored mother, (state what.)

*Fourth.* I give and bequeath to my son, D. E., (state what and how much.)

*Fifth.* I give and bequeath to the Missionary

Society of the Methodist Episcopal Church, incorporated by the Legislature of the State of New York, (state how much, and when and how to be paid.)

*Sixth.* All the rest and residue of my estate, real, personal, or mixed, of which I shall die seized and possessed, or to which I shall be entitled at the time of my decease, I give, devise, and bequeath to be equally (or otherwise) divided to and among my children, C. D., etc.

*Lastly.* I do nominate and appoint — to be the executors of this my last will and testament.

In testimony whereof I, the said A. B., have to this my last will and testament, contained on one sheet of paper, subscribed my name and affixed my seal this — day of — in the year of our Lord one thousand eight hundred, etc.

A. B. [L. s.]

The above instrument, consisting of (state the number of sheets) was now here subscribed by A. B., the testator, in the presence of each of us, and was at the same time declared by him to be his last will and testament; and we, at his request, sign our names thereto as attesting witnesses.

D. F., residing at — in — county.

G. H., residing at — in — county.

I. J., residing at — in — county.

If the witnesses do not see the testator subscribe the will, the following form of attestation should be used :—

The above instrument of one sheet (or otherwise) was, at the date thereof, declared to us by the testator, A. B., to be his last will and testament, and he then acknowledged to each of us that he had subscribed the same ; and we, at his request, sign our names hereto as attesting witnesses. (Sign and give residence, as in the will itself.)

#### CODICIL TO A WILL.

Whereas I, A. B., of, etc., have made my last will and testament bearing date of —, and have thereby, etc. Now I do by this my writing, which I hereby declare to be a codicil to my said will, to be taken as a part thereof, [will and direct, etc.,] give and bequeath to my wife, C. D., (state what, whether more or less.) I do hereby declare that my will is that only the sum of — be paid to —, and I do declare that — Society, which was not mentioned in my said will, shall receive — dollars, to be used by said Society, (state how.) And, lastly, it is my desire that this my present codicil be annexed to, and made a part of, my last will and testament to all intents and purposes.

In witness whereof I have set my hand and seal this —— day of —— .      A. B. [L. s.]

The codicil must be attested as such the same as the will itself, but not necessarily by the same witnesses.

Should the testator be unable, for any reason, to subscribe his will, and another person does it for him by his direction, the said person must write his own name as a witness to the will in the presence of two other witnesses. (See Wells, in *Every Man his own Lawyer*, pp. 92-104.)

#### ONE FURTHER REMARK.

Now, while we detest the practice of haunting the death bed of the wealthy to draw from them a will in the interest of an individual or an association, we must insist that it is the duty of somebody to remind them while in health and activity of their obligation to provide for the appropriation of their property, when they can no longer manage it themselves, in some *Christian* way, and not leave it to their heirs to curse posterity, as many have done. There is hardly a large city or town that is not blocked in its progress by vast family estates that the possessors cannot or will not sell at reasonable rates, and the names of the testators and their heirs are a stench in the nostrils of community. Such



men should be reached and advised if possible, however godless and worldly. Though they may have no religion, they may not be entirely destitute of humanity. They should be made to see their opportunity to lighten the crushing burdens of poverty and misfortune that lie at their own door.


These heavy estates are not very common in our Church, but we have multitudes of members who have the means of leaving their own near relatives wealthy, and yet largely supply the pressing wants of our denominational charities. Yes, there are many whom we received in their *poverty* and trained for God and usefulness, and who are caressed and honored, though they do not give at all in proportion to their means. Somebody who has influence with them should take up the cross and invite their attention to this delicate subject.

Then we have many others who are more or less rich and without children or dependents, who with proper effort may be induced to answer their own prayers, by giving bread to our starving institutions at death if not before.

It is not wealth that we plead for, but *daily bread*. Many of our interests are suffering for this, and might be relieved and strengthened by legacies that will never reach them unless se-

cured by will. Many cannot or will not give much now, for they don't know exactly how they are coming out. But will they not consent to "pledge" something to the cause, to be paid when they are gone? We think so. Let them be kindly advised, as well as prayed for, that they may live and work in the Church, by their money, after they are dead.

**THE END.**



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